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The Lakeside Classics

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37.	Vanished Arizona by Martha Summerhayes..	1939
38.	War on the Detroit by Thomas Verchères de Boucherville and James Foster.....	1940



FORT MALDEN AND AMHERSTBURG IN 1812

From the original painting by Catherine Reynolds, owned by Mr. E. A. Cleary of Windsor

The Lakeside Classics

War on the Detroit

The Chronicles of Thomas
Verchères de Boucherville and
The Capitulation
by an Ohio Volunteer

EDITED BY

MILO MILTON QUAIFE

SECRETARY OF

THE BURTON HISTORICAL COLLECTION



CHICAGO

The Lakeside Press
R. R. DONNELLEY & SONS Co.

Christmas, 1940

UNDER the title of *The Battle of Detroit*, we reprint the Journal of Thomas Verchères de Boucherville and "The Capitulation" by James Foster as the content of this year's volume of The Lakeside Classics. We do so somewhat apologetically, as we realize that by the time this little book reaches the reader, he will be thoroughly surfeited with war literature, but the selection of the material was made, the editing finished, and the type set before the collapse of the French Army, and it was too late to substitute a story of a more peaceful phase of early Western history.

The Battle of Detroit is interesting as bringing into sharp contrasts war as fought in America in 1812 and the present holocaust of Europe. Apropos the casualness of the War of 1812, we quote a paragraph from a sales catalogue of war books:

"The War of 1812 was fought under the most peculiar circumstances of any military venture in our history. In the first place, the British Cabinet on June 1, 1812 had conceded all but one American claim. The war,

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however, had been declared and was carried on regardless. In the second place, there was some question as to whom we should be fighting. France had offended as grievously as England and in the East particularly, Napoleon was regarded as the great menace to world peace. In the third place, the war was ostensibly fought to protect New England Maritime Rights but only the South and West were enthusiastic. New England was against it from the start. The subject of impressment which brought on the war was not mentioned in the Peace Treaty, and finally, its greatest battle at New Orleans which made Jackson a popular hero was fought after Peace had been concluded."

Gen. Hull, with headquarters at Detroit, was in command of all military stations throughout the West, which included Fort Dearborn at Chicago. Unfortunately, Gen. Hull, who had served with credit in the American Revolution, had grown old and timid and was entirely lacking in the vigor and daring which was so essential to leadership on the western frontier. Fort Detroit was hundreds of miles out in the wilderness and was surrounded by thousands of savages to whom the British were paying \$8.00 to \$12.00 apiece for American scalps. From what happened in Detroit, as depicted in this volume, we can easily judge that Gen. Hull was thoroughly scared. Mackinac had fallen into the hands of the British, and the situation at Fort Dearborn seemed to be even more precarious than that at Detroit.

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Accordingly, Hull sent a message by Winnemeg, a friendly Potawatomi chief, to Capt. Heald announcing the declaration of war with Great Britain and the fall of Mackinac, and ordering the evacuation of Fort Dearborn, if practical, and retirement to Fort Wayne. Unfortunately, the message was interpreted by Capt. Heald as a positive order to evacuate and he refused to be influenced by the arguments and protests of his two fellow officers and Chief Winnemeg. There was ample ammunition and food to withstand a long siege and Winnemeg reports that the troops, with their women and children, would surely be attacked by the Potawatomis. On August 15, 1812, Fort Dearborn was abandoned and the march started along the shore of Lake Michigan, and at a point two miles south of the Fort, the Indians attacked and most of the soldiers, women, and children were massacred. Thus, due to the timidity of Gen. Hull and the bullheadedness of Capt. Heald, Chicago is indebted to the only military drama in its history.

It is our good fortune that Dr. Quaife called our attention to the English translation of the *Journal of Thomas Verchères de Boucherville*, which had lain for several years on the shelves of the Burton Historical Collection. It had been published in its

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original French as a volume of The Antiquarian and Numismatic Society of Montreal, and we are beholden to the officers of that Society for their courtesy in giving us permission to print the English translation. As the Verchères Journal is little known by the collectors of Americana, we believe it will be an important addition to The Lakeside Classics.

The Capitulation by an "Ohio Volunteer" is also a rare item of Americana. Dr. Quaife expresses doubt as to whether James Foster was the author and also suspects that the author, whoever he was, writing in the first person, did not himself experience some of the events which he described. Perhaps the author was guilty of some plagiarism, but we must credit Foster with the fact that he never claimed to be the author, as his name only appears as the owner of the copyright, and whether he or some other "Ohio Volunteer" told the story, it is well told and gives us a realistic picture of the "Rabble in Arms" during the first year of the War of 1812.

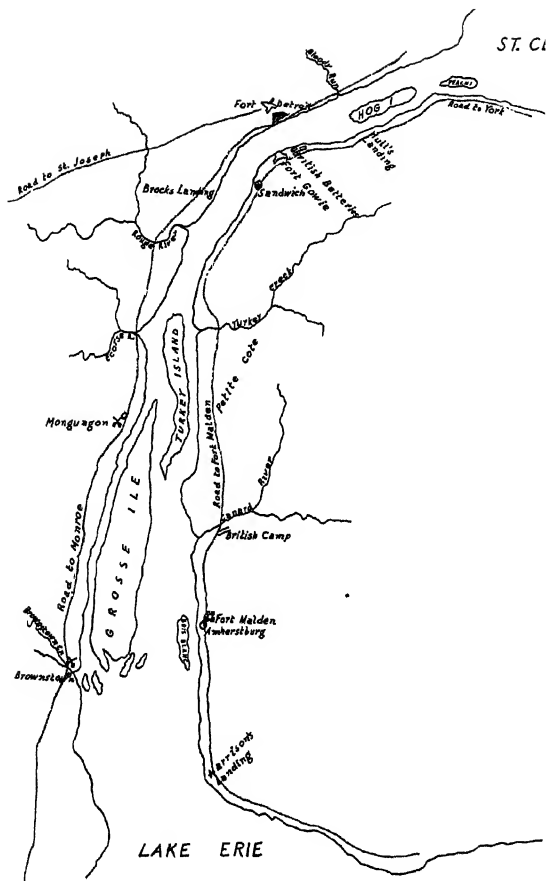
THE PUBLISHERS.

Christmas, 1940.

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Historical Introduction



THE DETROIT FRONT IN THE WAR OF 1812

Adapted from a contemporary map drawn by a British army eng

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WE pen these lines in mid-May, 1940; before they meet the reader's eye they will have passed into history. Through our open window may be seen the prodigal bloom of the lovely magnolias, the fresh hues of new-leaved maples and elms, green-carpeted lawns, jewelled with beds of yellow daffodils and flaming tulips. Bare-headed college youths stroll past, an old man, feeble and bent with age, a young mother leading a child, in the street a steady procession of vehicles richer than King Midas ever knew. The entire scene is charged with eager, radiant life.

So it might have been in the town of Detroit in May, 1812. No motor cars or cement-paved streets then met the eye, of course, but children and mothers, youths and old men went their accustomed ways; then, as now, the majestic river slipped past the town, hurrying to its union with the ocean in the distant Gulf of St. Lawrence. Then, as now, the mid-May sun shed its brilliance over the peaceful land, maples and elms

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donned anew their robes of summer verdure, while peach and apple and cherry were prodigal of their fragrant bloom.

But over the peaceful scene a terrible menace impended. Across the sea, even as in 1940, a world-shaking conflict was going on. Although America desired to have no part in it, our national rights and our peaceful commerce were assailed with fine impartiality by both warring nations. President Jefferson, the greatest exponent of pacifism in our history, strove earnestly to promote the rule of sweet reason in a world where brute force alone was respected, and toward the end longed only to terminate his administration before the deluge arrived. Thus it was reserved for his political heir, President Madison, to pilot the country through a three-year war. With the cheerful unconcern which habitually characterizes America in her international relations, with no real military machine and with practically no effort to provide one, we declared war in 1812 upon the greatest military power in the world. If Denmark in the spring of 1940 had declared war upon Germany and confidently anticipated romping into Berlin in a few weeks' time, the exhibition of national folly suggested would have been scarcely more astounding. As it turned out, such factors

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as our distance from Europe and the pre-occupation of Great Britain with the Napoleonic struggle preserved America from the national defeat and dismemberment we had so rashly invited. Saved by a hairs-breadth from such a fate, our political leaders, with cheerful inconstancy of memory, almost immediately began to beat the tomtoms on the glories of America's achievement in the war; with such success that even today but few Americans have any real knowledge of the disgraceful conduct of our armies in the War of 1812, while one of the few historical concepts which practically all Americans entertain is the fantastic untruth that on the sea our navy was brilliantly triumphant.

The narratives selected for this volume of the Lakeside Classics Series offer much of instruction and something of entertainment to the reader who cares to know the truth about the War of 1812. The war began with the Detroit campaign of General Hull, and its first blood was shed in one of the tiny skirmishes at the River Canard, where the highway from Windsor to Amherstburg crosses this unimpressive stream. The Hull campaign, therefore, initiated the three-year period of campaigns and marching armies which with but infrequent exceptions con-

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stituted for America one continuous nightmare of military ineptitude and impotence. General Upton has best summarized the painful story in sentences cutting as the surgeon's knife.¹ For the entire war, he shows that the United States enlisted 527,000 soldiers, exceeding in number the entire population, of both sexes and all ages, of Canada. Although Henry Clay had affirmed that Kentucky alone could conquer Canada in a few weeks' time, the close of the war found the United States invaded on both its borders, with imminent danger that New England would leave the Union and that much more of the territory won by the Treaty of 1783 would be lost to the United States. As for the Northwest, the theater of action of the narratives we reprint, Upton states the results in these words:

The cost of dispersing the 800 British regulars, who from first to last had made prisoners of Hull's army at Detroit, let loose the northwestern Indians, defeated and captured Winchester's command at Frenchtown, besieged the Northwestern army at Fort Meigs, and then invaded Ohio, . . . teaches a lesson well worth the attention of any statesman or financier.

Not counting the hastily organized and half-filled regiments of regulars sent to the West, the records of the Adjutant General's office show that about 50,000

¹ Emory Upton, *The Military Policy of the United States* (Washington, 1912), especially chaps. IX-XII.

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militia were called out in 1812 and 1813, for the states of Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Virginia for service against Proctor's army.

As the ultimate fate of the Scandinavian countries in the war of 1940 depends upon the final issue of the war between Germany and her allied foe, so in 1812 the fate of Fort Dearborn and other points in the Northwest was determined by the issue of the campaigns on the Detroit frontier. The stories which our authors set forth, therefore, are an intimate part of the history of Chicagoland. But the journal of Thomas Verchères de Boucherville is much more than this. He belonged to a prominent family of Quebec. In early manhood he entered upon the fur trade of the Far Northwest and after a year of service here he gained a new foothold in the commercial world as a junior clerk in a mercantile establishment of Toronto (then called York). By winning the confidence of his employer he advanced to the status of trusted agent in charge of the latter's business at Amherstburg, and presently to the ownership and conduct of his own business there. When the opening storm of war struck the Detroit River area in the summer of 1812, he naturally volunteered in support of his country's cause. His old-age narration of the experiences he underwent,

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although necessarily inaccurate in certain matters of detail, reproduces admirably the point of view of a French-Canadian participant in the struggles he describes. For vividness of narration and ability to bring back the scenes described to lifelike reality, his story fairly rivals the well-known recital of Major John Richardson in his *War of 1812*. Unlike the latter narrative, however, that of Verchères remained unpublished for almost a century after the occurrence of the events it describes. Then it was printed in Volume III of *The Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal* at Montreal. The *Journal* itself, however, is a relatively obscure publication, and Verchères' story seems never to have attracted the attention of either Canadian or American historians. Its present publication in English translation in one of the Lakeside Classics volumes should serve to bring to its author the measure of popular interest and of scholarly appreciation which hitherto has been denied him.

A few words of explanation concerning the way the editorial task has been performed are in order at this point. The translation of the narrative into English was made some years ago by Mrs. L. Oughtred Woltz, archivist of the Burton Historical Collection.

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She was a competent scholar, but she performed her task with no thought of eventual publication in mind. Although the translation we present is basically her work, the present Editor has revised it to such an extent that it would not be fair either to Mrs. Woltz or to the reader to hold her responsible for it. Since there can be no pretense of an exact translation, we have aimed throughout at presenting the author's evident meaning, without caring or pretending to supply a precise or literal rendering of his words. We have also corrected numerous individual mistakes, having to do with such details as proper names, statements of dates or distances, etc. Whenever the propriety of exercising such editorial discretion has seemed at all in doubt we have retained the author's statements, calling attention, on occasion, to their inaccuracy in an explanatory footnote.

It should afford added interest to the reader of Verchères' narrative if along with it he can peruse the story of a soldier who fought in the opposing army. For this reason we reprint the now rare little volume entitled *The Capitulation, or a History of the Expedition Conducted by William Hull, Brigadier-General of the Northwestern Army*, originally published at Chillicothe in the

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autumn of 1812. The author modestly conceals his identity under the pseudonym of "An Ohio Volunteer," and our examination of the narrative suggests that he may have had good reasons for his shyness. Librarians generally have followed the lead of Peter G. Thomson, the Ohio bibliographer of half a century ago, in naming James Foster as the author. Their reason for doing so lies in the fact that on October 23, 1812, James Foster appeared before the clerk of the U. S. District Court of Ohio and applied for a copyright on the book, "whereof he claims as proprietor." That he was also its author is an easy, although by no means necessary, assumption. Our own efforts either to verify or disprove it have been without positive result, yet they have elicited certain fragmentary data which should prove of some interest to the reader.

The narrative purports to be a first-hand relation of the observations and experiences of the writer, and in the preface we are directly informed that "while in the State of Ohio" he enlisted in a company which was captured at Detroit at the time of Hull's surrender, and that on his return to "this place"—presumably Chillicothe—he yielded to the persuasions of his friends that he write a history of the campaign.

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All of this is commonplace enough, even to the affected modesty which induces a writer to publish a book merely in response to the solicitations of his friends; but certain other aspects of the situation are of less usual occurrence. For example, a soldier is ordinarily proud of his military organization, much as a student is proud of his college connection. Both this reason and the considerations of clarity and good faith unite to lead a soldier, relating his experiences, to identify his military unit and his own place in it. Yet the "Ohio Volunteer," in addition to concealing his name, conceals, also, all knowledge of the identity of the unit in which he served. The reasons for such shyness become the more intriguing when we note that—assuming the validity of the statements in the preface—his identity was known to his friends, and apparently to the members of the army in general. Insofar as the present Editor's knowledge goes, *The Capitulation* was the first "history" of the Hull campaign to be committed to print. The Ohio soldiers who marched with Hull to Detroit in the summer of 1812 commonly returned to their homes about the beginning of September. All America at the moment was avid for news of the campaign, and the book has all the earmarks of a compilation hastily thrown

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together with the object of capitalizing upon this current popular interest. Apart from a generous offering of military orders and other contemporary public documents, the 84-page narrative contains the supposedly personal recital of the author's observations and experiences. Our admiration for the perspicuity displayed therein is not lessened by the discovery that a large proportion of the recital has been copied directly from the journal of another "Ohio Volunteer," Robert Lucas. Lucas was an intelligent and enterprising officer under Hull, who subsequently served as Governor both of Ohio and of Iowa Territory. His journal of the campaign was not published until 1906, when the State Historical Society of Iowa brought it out; but it had been utilized by Lewis Cass as the basis of his diatribe against General Hull which proved a powerful factor in procuring the latter's court martial and death sentence; and it was evidently placed at the disposal of our author, the extent of whose copying will be evident to any reader who takes the trouble to compare the two narratives.

Who then was the author, and why did he not record his own observations instead of appropriating those of another? The possibility—despite the statements in the preface—that he was a professional journalist or

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hack-writer who did not himself participate in the campaign he describes, cannot be ignored. Concerning James Foster, the putative author of the book, we have found only a little information. The *Roster of Ohio Soldiers in the War of 1812*, belatedly published by the State of Ohio in 1916, lists among the more than 26,000 soldiers carried on the army muster rolls the name of James Foster, sergeant in Captain William Keys' company. Although the compiler of the volume identifies this as "probably from Ross County," we know from other sources that Captain Keys was a pioneer settler and long a prominent citizen of Highland County, and it is a fair presumption that the company he led to Detroit in 1812 came from this county. But one searches the published history of Highland County in vain for any mention of James Foster, although he may have been an unnamed member of the clan of five Foster brothers who were numbered among the pioneer settlers of Pike and Ross counties. In the Ohio army of 1812 about one-fourth the entire number held rank as commissioned or noncommissioned officers. If Sergeant James Foster of Captain Keys' company was in fact the author of our narrative, his lowly rank suggests that he was either a very young man

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or one of no outstanding influence in his home community. That the author—whoever he was—did not actually live in Ohio is inferentially twice suggested: first, in the preface, where he states that “while in the State of Ohio” he joined the company; and secondly in the Shakespearian quotation accompanying the copyright notice, beginning “My business in this state made me a Looker on here in Vienna.” With this statement of these various clues we place the problem in the lap of the reader—was the author in fact, as bibliographers have heretofore supposed, James Foster, a soldier in Hull’s army; or was he some unknown journalist who utilized the Lucas journal and other contemporary sources of information to compile a narrative to satisfy the popular demand for information, without himself having served in the campaign?

However these things may be, the Ohio Volunteer’s narrative is a useful historical record. The observations copied from Lucas are at least as valuable as those the putative author might have set down, and the record as a whole discloses clearly the contemporary state of the public mind in Ohio, not merely with respect to General Hull but also concerning such things as military discipline and the art of war in general. If

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present-day Americans have the capacity to profit by the lamp of experience, they will derive from a reading of *The Capitulation* important light upon how *not* to organize and conduct our future armies.

We have no knowledge of the number of copies of *The Capitulation* that were published, but all the attendant circumstances justify the inference that it was considerable. As long ago as 1880, however, the book had become decidedly rare. Thomson, the Ohio bibliographer, had never seen more than three copies;² and such institutions as the Library of Congress, the State Library of Ohio, the Ohio Archeological and Historical Society Library, and the public libraries of Detroit, Cincinnati, and Cleveland are today without them. The Union Catalog of American Libraries lists copies of the book in seven institutions. *American Book Prices Current* records but few sales of it, and these at relatively high prices. In twenty years but three copies have been sold, for \$140, \$175, and \$240 respectively. Quite likely many Ohio attics conceal additional copies, but

² The present Editor has never seen any; it is interesting to observe that the photostat copy of the one he has utilized bears on the title page the signature of Thomas Worthington, Governor of Ohio and U. S. Senator.

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until these shall yield up their contents it is obvious that most readers will find access to the original edition either difficult or impracticable. Its first reprinting in the Lakeside Classics Series, after an interval of 128 years, should constitute a real, if modest, contribution to the study of Midwestern American history. Save for editorial annotations, we reprint the book *verbatim* as it came from the frontier Chillicothe press of James Barnes in the autumn of 1812.

M. M. QUAIFFE

Detroit,
May 15, 1940.

Journal of
Thomas Verchères de Boucherville

Journal of Thomas Verchères de Boucherville

Part 1

FUR TRADER AND MERCHANT

IN the year 1803 I left my father's house for Lachine, having engaged for a seven-year term of service with Sir Alexander Mackenzie as clerk for the New Northwest Company in the Upper Country. Three days after my arrival at Lachine I embarked in a canoe belonging to Mr. Maillou, a trader at the Grand Portage. Our guide was called Larocque; the steersman's name was Robillard; both were famous *chanteurs de voyage*. My fellow-clerks, for the company as well as on this voyage, were Vienne, Curotte,¹ McMullin, Gordon and Cameron.

¹ Apparently this man was Michael Curot (Curotte), a clerk of the Company who was sent to spend the ensuing winter of 1803-04 on the upper waters of the Chippewa River in northwestern Wisconsin. He kept a journal of his experiences, which is preserved in the Dominion Archives at Ottawa and has been published in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XX, 396-471.

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After a journey of several days we reached Lake Nipissing, where we were detained three days by a northeast wind, accompanied by a considerable fall of snow. With no protection but our light canvas tents we were nearly frozen and this gave me my first taste of the seductive influence of cold at the last extremity. On the fourth day, however, we were able to launch our canoes and continue our journey to Sault Ste. Marie, though not without great discomfort.

A youth of eighteen, and never before away from the paternal home for any long journey, I understood next to nothing of the barbaric jargon of the voyageurs nor did I know anything of their habits and manner of life. Alone with them in this frail craft, only now did I begin to reflect upon the folly which had induced me to share such an adventure. The prospect of a seven years' engagement, with no hope of drying the tears of my poor mother, who was even now grieving over my waywardness, was almost more than I could bear, and my restless fearlessness was fast giving way to the cravings of nature, when the sonorous voice of the steersman began to intone the words of the merry song "Where are we going to sleep tonight?" and I was about joining in the reply "At home as

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ever, laridondee," when I found myself chasing back a flood of tears. Instead of a good bed in a warm and comfortable room there was only a tent for covering and a couch upon the bare earth. But I soon mastered my grief and at the second refrain was ready to join with the others, only in place of the usual words I sang "My dear tent as ever." By the time we arrived at Sault Ste. Marie my homesickness was beginning to abate somewhat although I was still far from cured. For two days I had been unable to eat food of any kind, and of all the maladies I have ever experienced, this was one of the most painful.

We learned at the Sault that the Chevalier² had arrived with his brigade some days in advance of us. We were invited to take breakfast with him in his tent at ten o'clock, and without waiting for a second invitation (especially I who had eaten nothing for forty-eight hours) we hastened to accept. Our worthy host regaled us in princely style.

² Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who had been knighted in 1802 in recognition of his achievements as an explorer. *Alexander Mackenzie's Voyage to the Pacific Ocean in 1793*, edited by the present writer, was published as the Lakeside Classics volume for 1931. An account of his career, and of his connection with the various North West companies, is given in this volume, pp. XIV-XXVII.

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Soup and fresh meat, with broiled white fish, made a delicious menu and believe me, we feasted. I was delighted to find here someone I knew, a Mr. Lamothe, who told me that the Nolins also lived at the Sault. I felt it my duty to call upon the family of my friend of early days at the College of Montreal (directed by the Sulpician brothers), and this I did before leaving for the Grand Portage. I was received with much kindness by Mr. Nolin who had already heard of me from his son who had left for the Upper Country a year before.³

The seventh day after our arrival we were ordered to be ready to sail on the schooner *Perseverance*,⁴ commanded by Cap-

³ The Nolin (Nolan) family had been prominent in the Northwest fur trade since early in the eighteenth century. The writer's schoolmate was probably a son of either Augustin or Jean Baptiste Nolin, both of whom were associated with Sault Ste. Marie and the fur trade in this period. Prior to the War of 1812 Augustin Nolin built a residence at the Sault and retired from active trade. At the capture of Mackinac in July, 1812, he was influential in restraining the Indians from massacre, and in 1815 he forewarned the Americans of an impending attack upon Sault Ste. Marie. Various documents in the Detroit Public Library disclose that Jean Baptiste Nolin was associated in some capacity with the North West Company while a resident of the Sault.

⁴ The *Perseverance*, in which Verchères traversed Lake Superior, was an 85-ton schooner built by the

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tain White. The Chevalier, with McKenzie and George Moffatt,⁵ his two nephews, were to sail with us. About three in the afternoon we were all on board, when the anchor, yielding to the sturdy pull of the sailors, appeared above the surface of the water. Every man was at his post and the wind was blowing a hurricane, when the captain's voice was heard above the plaintive groans of the rigging and the lashings of the tem-

North West Company for service on that lake. A companion vessel on Lake Superior was the *Nancy*, which was built at Detroit in 1789. In 1814 an American army under Major Holmes raided the Sault, burned the North West Company warehouses and other property, blew up the canal locks, and attempted to run the *Perseverance* down the rapids into Lake Huron; she ran upon a rock, and was thereupon burned by her captors. The *Nancy* sought hiding in Notawasaga Bay (head of Georgian Bay), but being discovered and in danger of being taken by the *Niagara*, Perry's flagship in the battle of Lake Erie, she was fired and destroyed by her crew. The ruins of the *Nancy* have been found in recent years at the scene of her destruction.

⁵ George Moffatt was born in England, Aug. 13, 1787. He came out to Canada in 1801, entered the fur trade, and achieved success and fortune. He subsequently held important political offices in Lower Canada. He made his home at Montreal, where he died in 1865. W. Stewart Wallace, historian of the North West Company, states that confirmation of Moffatt's supposed relationship to Sir Alexander Mackenzie is lacking.

War on the Detroit

pest, "Hoist the sails! Hoist the sails!" In less than two minutes time we felt the pitching of the vessel as she was borne along over the rough waves, and we were embarked on the broad waters of majestic Lake Superior.

For the rest of that day and the following night and day we sailed before a driving wind. About six in the evening the sky became suddenly overcast; thick, black clouds shut out the daylight, while rolling up from the west came a threatening mass, pierced by vivid streaks of lightning.

All of us watched this heavy mass of black cloud with the anxious countenance of the mariner who sees the arbiter of his fate approaching. Yet was I spellbound in admiring wonder at the superb poise of our masts, now bending their heads to the level of the water as though in playful sport with the waves, now rising in the gleam of lightning flashes only to plunge downward again. The thunder roared with redoubled force at every shock. The swiftly repeated detonations were like bombs bursting about us from every point of the horizon. Suddenly a brilliant flash reflected millions of rays from all parts of our vessel and a thunderbolt struck the water with a terrific crash not more than ten paces from us.

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A shudder as of death ran through me. This terrible shock was a warning from God to prepare for the last voyage to eternity, and involuntarily I raised my eyes to heaven as though imploring its aid. The waves beat furiously against the sides of our vessel. All the forces of evil seemed united in a conspiracy for our destruction so fierce were the assaults upon our ship. Then above the unspeakable tumult came the comforting cry, "Land! Land!"

Clinging fast to the bowsprit mast during the tempest, in a brief flash of lightning Captain White had caught a glimpse of the Milons or Baribux Islands. We were about to strike on the outlying rocks when by a dexterous turn of the wheel he saved us from our perilous position. This feat alone should add much to his renown. For some time he had lost his bearings owing to the rapidity of our course during that terrible night of storm.

It was necessary that the prow be kept to windward, and the vessel pitched and rolled so that we could no longer stand upright. We were so sick that a stranger to the scene would have said we had all taken a strong emetic, and even the Chevalier, who had made several ocean voyages, was as sick as the rest. The ship rolled to a

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height of ten feet or more from one side to the other and during this time two valuable cows, whose loss we could ill afford, were washed from the bridge. Towards morning, the sky began to clear and the wind diminished perceptibly. We were not yet out of danger, however, for the waves ran high and threatened to dash us on the rocks at any minute.

By a very special providence the wind shifted some degrees, enabling us to tack and withdraw some distance from that dangerous shore. Soon we were under full sail and happily reached the Grand Portage which I had so often heard mentioned when a boy by the voyageurs of the village.

You can doubtless imagine with what relief I again set foot on land. Although free from the dangers of the deep I was most unsteady and stumbled over every little pebble in my path. So lightheaded was I that I seemed to be climbing and descending the waves at every step, but like all matters of the imagination these illusions passed and though sad at heart and stealthily drying a tear for my dear parents I set myself to the task at hand, got my box and bed of two blankets ashore, and carried them up to the fort. Situated on the brow of a sloping hill, over a mile

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from the landing, the view from here was very fine. It had been built by the Northwest Company and consisted of palisades of tall cedar pickets with bastions at the four corners. Within the enclosure were several good buildings for the use of members of the Company, and towering over all was an immense flagstaff from which, on Sundays and when heralding the arrival of the principal bourgeois, floated a large and very handsome flag.⁶

During my whole stay at the Grand Portage and until I had orders from the Chevalier to set out for winter quarters I was employed at the shed where our liquors were stored. I was told to repair to the

⁶ For Alexander Henry's account of his visit to Grand Portage a generation earlier than Verchères, see *Alexander Henry's Travels and Adventures*, the Lakeside Classics volume for 1921, Chap. 8. The trading post and fort—also known as Grand Portage—was long the chief station of the North West Company in the interior of the continent. For several decades prior to 1804 it was the center of the fur trade of the Far North West. About the time of Verchères' visit the place underwent an abrupt decline, the discovery that it lay south of the international boundary causing the traders to remove their activities to Fort William, which was established in 1804. In recent years, governmental authorities have undertaken the task of excavating the remains of the ancient post and constructing a modern replica of it.

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place where the canoes destined for the North were in waiting. My effects were carried on the backs of my men and at the far end of the Portage, which is nine miles long, I found others busy gumming the canoes preparatory to our departure on the morrow. The guide assigned to me for this northern journey was called Ducharme; and my steersman's name was Laporte; neither had that gift of song I had so much enjoyed on the way to Sault Ste. Marie. At daybreak we began to load the canoe for Fort Dauphin and by nine in the morning were ready to set out. It was not long before we encountered quite a little fall of water, called The Partridge, and were obliged to portage. Desirous of helping my men, the heavier end of a barrel of gum fell on my hand, cutting off a part of the index finger. This was very painful but fortunately I had brought along a small bottle of turpentine. I applied a few drops and it was not many days before the wound was healed.

We had a comfortable voyage as far as Rainy Lake, a distance of one hundred and thirty leagues from our starting point. Here I was very glad to make the acquaintance of the clerk, Lacombe, a cousin of the Lacombe family of my native parish, more

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especially as we were delayed eight days while waiting for orders from our superiors. These came at last, and reloading our canoes with corn, tallow, and other provisions, we again set out. On the twelfth day, after encountering many falls and portages, we reached the head waters of Winnipeg River.

Here I will relate an incident of the journey that seemed to me very amusing. At the rapids between Rainy Lake and this place we met with vast numbers of pelicans, called by the Indians *chietecs*, either flying over our heads or resting on the water. These birds would raise themselves a little, then with incredible swiftness they would disappear for an instant under the water and come up with a fish in the beak. With a gulp this was stored away in their pouch and the fishing continued until the weight of the prey forced the bird to retire to a safe distance for leisurely digestion, always in some fear, no doubt, of becoming in turn the prey of the voyageurs, who could then easily capture them.

We remained several days at the headwaters of this river, which we left about the first of September to enter the lake of the same name.⁷ These were days of per-

⁷ They had descended Winnipeg River from Lake of the Woods to Lake Winnipeg.

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fect calm. After several days' journey, at the turn of a point called Pike's Head we came upon an encampment, having many large bark canoes drawn up on the land while their owners were engaged in stretching their nets in the hope of obtaining enough fish for their subsistence. This induced us to do likewise. I had my tent pitched, stored the goods in a safe place, and then made ready for a visit to these new-found neighbors, believing them to belong to the old North West Company, the competitor of the one I now represented. Nor was I mistaken; they proved to be employees of that company who had camped here for several days to engage in fishing while on their way to the shallows of the Winnipeg River.

I found these poor people almost desperate, having barely caught enough fish to supply their daily food since making their encampment. Their leader was pacing up and down the beach. I inquired his name and, having been told it was Jacob, I went up to him and we quickly struck up an acquaintance. He was from Lower Canada and had a married sister at Boucherville. Without further ceremony I invited Mr. Jacob to come with me to my tent for refreshments and he eagerly accepted. My

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cook made fritters of flour and suet and with the salted meat I gave him the best I had. After this frugal repast we spent the evening in conversation of indifferent interest to anyone but ourselves. Our talk was interrupted some two hours after midnight by my guide, who came to say that we ought to take advantage of the calm weather to cross the bay which extended about nine miles before us. Accordingly, we launched the canoes and continued our journey.

Leaving Lake Winnipeg in our rear we entered another called Manitoba. The wind having freshened, we had navigated fully three-quarters of the distance across when suddenly the canoe I was in grounded in a shallow and sprang a leak! The water poured in over our feet and what was worse our goods went overboard. Fortunately the other canoes came to our rescue and collected all the articles that were floating gaily away. A few days later we reached the Dauphin River and were then only a few miles from the Fort itself.

This structure is called a fort because it is surrounded with pickets and equipped with bastions, although it has no cannon. It is built of logs and is shaped like the head of a dog. A single clay chimney rises from the center; the openings are hung with undressed

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hides and the outside is covered with slabs of elm bark. So now you see this famous fort.⁸

I at once made over my canoes to the chief clerk of the post and their contents to the factor. A few days after my arrival the Commandant, whose name was McMurray, told me that he had orders from Sir Alexander Mackenzie to keep me under his charge for the winter.

It was about the middle of September. I had here the extreme pleasure of meeting young Nolin, whom I have mentioned above. This young adventurer was employed by the old Northwest Company. Notwithstanding the jealousy existing between the two companies he contrived to see us often.

Since my arrival I had been busy mixing strong liquors which, when thus combined, were called High Wines, a beverage beloved by the savages because of its quick action in reducing them to a state of drunken in-

⁸ The first Fort Dauphin was established by the sons of Vérendrye on the northwest shore of Lake Manitoba. It was soon destroyed by the Indians, but was rebuilt in 1743 and was probably occupied until the downfall of New France. The Fort Dauphin of Verchères' time was also called Dauphin Lake House. Subject to several removals, the fort (or its successors) was maintained for almost 100 years. See Ernest Voorhis, *Historic Forts and Trading Posts of the French Regime* . . . (Ottawa, 1930), 58.

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toxication. It was the "firewater" which proved so disastrous in its effects upon the aborigines of all the tribes.

On November 15 Mr. McMurray sent me on a trading expedition among the Indians. I was to be located about one hundred and twenty miles away and to have with me an interpreter called Clermont and five men to carry the goods. We left the next morning at four, our destination being Vichiosnosepinque, the Sauteuse name meaning "Two Rivers."⁹

All that day we tramped, sometimes through dense forests, sometimes over broad plains where fire had once raged, leaving a black, charred waste. We soon looked the same. From time to time as I glanced at my men, in spite of fatigue and aching limbs I could scarcely refrain from shouts

⁹ The map drawn to illustrate the exploration of the region west of Lake Superior by S. J. Dawson in 1857-58 shows Two Rivers on the Assiniboine about 160 miles almost due west of present-day Winnipeg. This would be about the right distance south (and slightly west) of Fort Dauphin to comply with the author's statements concerning his trading destination; the vagueness of these statements, together with editorial unfamiliarity with the local geography, prevent anything other than this tentative identification of the scene of Verchères' initial experiences as a trader in the Far Northwest.

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of laughter, so grotesquely funny were their dirty begrimed faces. We were like so many negroes.

Once I missed my dog, a faithful, affectionate companion. Going back a few paces I called "Osmar! Osmar!" Instead of the big tawny animal I knew, something black came rushing towards me, leaping over me with such force that I lost my balance and fell to the ground. Before this I could not believe it was my dog, so that was what I got for doubting him.

About five in the afternoon we entered a magnificent grove of tall pines, standing out a few rods from the main forest. The last rays of the setting sun gilded the tree tops and the blue of the firmament rivalled the Soul of the Virgin in purity. Yet the cold was intense, coming in sudden gusts with the wind that had sprung up from the north. I was in distress. It seemed impossible to proceed another step, but I must either go on or be left behind alone in that dense forest. If we were not there first the rival company would get our trade. I knew not what to do. Still there was only one decision to make, and however much I hesitated I knew I must be left behind. With strict injunctions, therefore, to leave me a clear blazed trail for the morrow, which they

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promised faithfully to do, I let my men go on without me. I kept my dog, and a gun and a dagger in case of surprise. As soon as my men were gone I began searching for the best place to camp. I then made a great fire and laid in a supply of dry branches for the night. It was now about nine in the evening and time I should think of preparations for supper. I put a piece of venison before the fire to roast while I had my first sleep, then wrapped in the blanket I had taken the precaution to bring with me I lay down on my pile of branches as gratefully as in the most comfortable bed. In spite of all this, however, I could not sleep. It is my habit to be as wakeful as a sentry, with one ear open for any disturbance, no matter how slight, and at each rustle of the leaves in the frosty air I would reach for my gun.

About an hour after midnight my dog, who was sleeping at my feet, raised himself stiffly alert with his eyes fixed on the edge of the woods as though to pierce the darkness. He remained in this attitude for a minute or so, then lay down again. Soon he roused the second time, growling hoarsely, and made several circuits of my bed before he came back to lie down. Clearly he sensed the approach of danger. I examined and primed my gun, felt the edge of my dagger

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to be sure it would be ready in case of need, and satisfied that both were in order, I began to make a hasty ascent of a great pine tree. My poor dog watched every movement and seemed to understand, for as soon as he saw me hiding as well as I could in the foliage he naturally gave a thought to his own safety and plunged quietly into the thickest part of the wood. I soon heard a heavy crackling tread which came nearer and nearer. I was not afraid but my limbs shook and my teeth chattered. Then by the light of the fire I saw something white approaching leisurely through the wood and could make out the huge head of some strange animal. It was a polar bear, come to pay me a visit. Without waiting for me to descend from my aerial retreat that I might offer him the hospitality of my frugal supper, he proceeded to help himself and with his great paw drew it from the fire and devoured every morsel in no time, much to my displeasure, needless to say. How I should have liked to send him a leaden messenger asking the reason of his impertinent intrusion! But I saw that this dangerous cannibal had not noticed me in my hiding place and I thought it the better part of valor to let him depart without starting a quarrel. Besides I was not entirely without recompense since, for

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some inexplicable reason which I cannot even yet understand, his presence had entirely relieved me of that dreadful ache in my legs from which I had been suffering previous to his appearance. The night seemed to me interminably long but like all other nights it came to an end at last and soon the sun, gloriously radiant, mounted step by step above the horizon and shedding its brilliance on all around bathed me, too, with light and called me to leave my improvised resting place.

I needed no second warning but descended without more ado and with equal promptitude gathered up my belongings, fearful that my nocturnal visitor, now graciously retired somewhere near, might be tempted to an embrace before my departure to reward me for the excellent repast I had provided. He had kindly overlooked the morsel of dried meat that was wrapped in my blanket and he might well conceive the idea of returning to see if I were still so hospitably inclined. I therefore ate a part of this in haste, for I was almost famished, and saved the rest for my evening meal. Without more delay I then set out, followed by my faithful companion, Osmar.

My people had made a clear blazed trail, as they promised, either by chipping the

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trunks of trees with their hatchets or by cutting off the ends of branches after the manner of the Indians. My dog, who on seeing Mr. Bruin take leave of me had returned to sleep at the foot of the tree where I had so nimbly retired, now followed every step and by his joyous gambols seemed trying to divert my mind from the profound solitude in which I now found myself. Without this experience I could never have conceived anything like the oppressive silence of these immense forests. So I walked the whole of that day. Night was falling and I had nothing but the small piece of dried meat I had kept from breakfast. I was faint from fatigue and wholly demoralized. To add to my misery the thought of my father's house haunted me in a manner not calculated to give me the slightest comfort or consolation. Why had I placed myself in such an extremity? I must have been crazy! And now came the torments of a consuming thirst. I had tried to extract moisture from wild rosebuds, but all to no avail, and I suffered the pangs of martyrdom. Suddenly I was drawn from the pit of my despair by the sound of a gun fired at no great distance. It gave me new life. Then just as quickly as I had felt the joy of salvation came the sensation of fear. I was only too

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well aware of the war then going on between the cruel tribe of Gros-Ventres and those Indians with whom we traded, and it might easily happen that I was now in the vicinity of a party of these warriors, who would either scalp me on the spot or carry me away captive to their own country and perhaps adopt me, wholly deprived of all the blessings of civilization. Either alternative caused me to forget the pangs of thirst which had seemed so intolerable a moment before. Came a second detonation, this time still nearer, then every fear vanished as almost in the same breath I heard my name called. Shamed as I am to acknowledge it, I was beside myself with joy. I made haste to answer by firing my own gun and within a few minutes I was among my own people. They had foreseen that I might become a prey to hunger and had brought some cooked venison, a feast in itself.

My first words when they were still some twenty paces distant were to ask if they had seen water near, knowing well they would not bring any along. In this region of lakes, rivers, and streams, big and little, such an idea would never have occurred to them. One of them came forward saying that a spring of pure water was quite near, and I threw myself among them with a cry that

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they take me to it at once. Soon I had the unspeakable bliss of quenching a thirst that had tormented me for hours. I quickly saw that I could not satisfy it at one draught and we camped in that spot where it was possible to eat and drink at will, a more copious and varied entertainment than we had enjoyed for days.

Next morning we left at dawn for the Indian camp and arrived about ten o'clock. Had I not myself experienced the hospitality and kindness of these savages I would never have believed it. They welcomed me as a friend. The head chief assigned me one of his own tents and loaded me with attentions. He was called Wacagobo, "The Merciful One," and his countenance reflected the attributes his name implied. It was the likeness of St. Charles Borromeo. I was obliged to remain with them more than a month because of inflammation in my legs from the long and wearisome tramp, but my men left the next day with the peltries obtained in trade. Before they set out I asked my interpreter, Clermont, to explain to the chief what care I must have during my illness and to assure him of ample recompense both for himself and his family when I should be well enough to return to Fort Dauphin. He replied in terms eloquent in

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their simplicity: "If we take good care of the young Frenchman it will not be for pay. You know that we have always loved the French. Our first father was a Frenchman and we love his children." How I longed to be able to converse in their own language during my sojourn with them. They had set a great number of traps and caught many beaver, apparently without any difficulty, and were ready to trade the skins when my men came back for me. I confess that I was not sorry to say good-bye, kind as they had been, preferring a more civilized life than I had led with these hospitable savages, but their sorrow at the parting touched my heart. It was now the middle of December with three feet of snow on the ground, and we were obliged to make the return trip on snowshoes. In three days we were at the Fort.

This was my first expedition in the service of the Company. It had been accomplished under difficulties and I was glad to find myself back in safety. No more sleeping in dug-outs in the snow, as we had done for the last three days, and although my father would not have kept his cattle in as miserable a structure as the one we lodged in at the fort, I felt quite happy and contented after my late experience.

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On New Year's Eve as a diversion I went with Lafleur to set traps on the ice not far from the fort. I wished to discover whether I could meet with the same success that rewarded the efforts of the savages. Early next morning we returned and found we had a fine catch. Several martins, otter, and other animals were in the traps, but our last trap, placed at some distance from the others, was not in its place. It was necessary to learn what had become of it, and we decided to follow the tracks. After we had walked fully three-quarters of an hour we came to a dense clump of saplings at the foot of a tree and here was a big white wolf in the act of gnawing his foot off to regain his liberty. Even as we came up the operation was completed. Another second and he would be off. I had raised the tomahawk for a blow when he seized the handle in his terrible teeth and snapped it in two. Lafleur, nothing daunted, quickly struck him with a club. He staggered a few steps, fell, and we finished him. All aglow with such deeds of prowess I returned to the fort thinking myself already a big shot. Then for a whole week I remained indoors, not sorry for the leisure after all the exertions I had made.

See us now reduced to one meal a day and that of smoked meat, the hunt having en-

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tirely failed for some weeks owing to the adverse weather. But our fast was not of long duration.

Towards the end of January, Mr. McMurray returned from a trip among the Indians and reported many wigwams at Duck Mountain¹⁰ filled with peltries. I was told to prepare to spend the remainder of the winter there. Accordingly I set out early in February with five men from our fort, Boisvert, Goulet, Lauzon, Allaire, and Clermont, the interpreter. We had with us two large dogs, hitched to a toboggan piled high with our trade goods and liquors, and at midnight we set out. The weather was intensely cold but dry, the humidity of the winter atmosphere in Lower Canada being unknown here. In three days we reached the Indian camp and found them most impatient for our coming, having expected us daily for some time. The trade having been made and the fall credits pre-arranged, we presented them two barrels of rum of ten gallons each. This is the custom after a trade of any consequence, but before delivering it

¹⁰ Duck Mountain is the height of land, rising some 600 or 700 feet, lying west of Lake Winnipegosis; it is about 75 miles northwest of Fort Dauphin, which in Verchères' time was located at the southwest end, or corner, of Lake Dauphin.

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I took the precaution of having all the chiefs meet me in solemn assembly that I might get possession of all the guns, knives, and other weapons they had among them, and thus prevent an indiscriminate carnage when the firewater began to take effect. I had been forewarned about their devilish conduct under intoxication and the reality did nothing to disabuse my mind. It was loathsome in the extreme. Cries and shrieks were heard on all sides, and men and women alike presented the most disgusting spectacle. The night was a veritable hell, a nameless orgy; even the damned could present nothing more hideously frightful than I was obliged to witness that night.

The third day after this debauch, when the Indians were beginning to recover from its effects, I sent off two of my men with the peltries we had received from them, keeping with me the three who understood, more or less, the language of these aborigines. Then, through their chiefs, I had the weapons returned that we had taken for safe keeping before their disgraceful carnival. We remained with them all through February and part of March, when we set out for another village some miles distant to trade the remainder of our goods. When this had been accomplished we returned to the first camp.

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It was now the middle of March and the weather was exceptionally fine, as though spring were at hand. The Indians had even begun to tap the maple trees preparatory to sugar-making. For the first time we learned to use steeped wild cherry instead of tea and found it a delicious beverage.

The Masagnon tribe now came to join the Indians with whom we had been trading. Among these forest people there are always some who practice sorcery and tents are especially reserved for their use. One evening when all the hunters were gathered together in some sort of dance, a rhythmic movement to the raucous beating of the drum and the *chichaquoi*,¹¹ the old chief appeared suddenly in their midst and said in a loud voice: "Young men retire each of you to your own wigwams. I shall spend the night in my juggling tent that tomorrow at sunrise I may tell you what is happening all around us." He addressed them in the native tongue, and precisely at midnight he

¹¹ The *chickaquoi* (variously spelled) was a rattle constructed from a deer hoof or other suitable material. The Chippewa word for rattlesnake was *shishikwe*, which may suggest the derivation of the name, although the implement was not confined to any single tribe. For one rather dramatic illustration of its use in Indiana in 1790 see Henry Hay's narrative, in *Wis. Hist. Soc. Proceedings* for 1914, 248.

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entered his tent. For some minutes there was a profound silence, after which his voice could be heard in a plaintive chant which suddenly changed to a low murmur of words. Then the most frightful shrieks were heard, continuing for at least two hours. The hideous ceremony continued until sunrise, when he ordered all the hunters to assemble and thus addressed them: "My braves, prepare for war! A terrible struggle will commence this very night. The enemy awaits only the shades of darkness to surprise and destroy you. The White Crow came to me last night in warning, a sure sign of approaching trouble."¹²

My interpreter translated the message for me and I could not repress a smile. This displeased them exceedingly, and one of them came up to me and asked: "Does the young Frenchman despise the coming of the White Crow? He does not understand nor realize that this is our leader in misfortunes." Again my interpreter translated for me. He with my other two men, all somewhat superstitious and inclined to give credence to the

¹² Readers of the Lakeside Classics volumes will wish to compare this recital by Verchères with Alexander Henry's interesting report upon the arts of the medicine man; see especially chaps. 14 and 21 of his *Travels and Adventures*.

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predictions of the great chief, then began to urge me to return to Fort Dauphin, taking with me the two dogs. At the same time they cautioned me not to go by the lake because of the recent rapid thaw. Accordingly I left early that same morning, with the two dogs harnessed to the sled and a dozen beaver skins packed on it. Descending the mountain, about five o'clock in the evening I reached the shore of Lake Dauphin, where I found an Indian wigwam and an aged couple of the Sonnant tribe. The old man tried to persuade me to go no farther if I valued my life, but I did not at the time understand what he was trying to tell me. Later, at the fort, it was all explained and I saw what a risk I had taken. The next morning, therefore, I set out, the old couple watching my departure with the most mournful expression. I proceeded in safety until about three in the afternoon, now over half-melted ice, now through beds of rushes seven or eight feet high, my dogs always close at my heels. What was my surprise, then, on emerging from such a thicket to find myself facing a swift current from the mountain filled with cakes of floating ice. It was more than three hundred feet across and for a moment I was terror-stricken at the sight, realizing what it meant

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for me. At whatever risk I must make the plunge, so I fastened the pack on my back and with the aid of my poor dogs succeeded in reaching mid-current. But now I was beyond my depth and gave myself up for lost, the more so as just then an enormous cake of ice came rushing down from above with the sole aim, as it seemed to me, of crushing me to the bottom of the river. But no! All it wanted was to relieve me of my pack, and with renewed courage and redoubled effort and care I reached the farther bank, all but exhausted, needless to say. Here, I stripped off my clothes and wrung them piece by piece, as much to lessen their weight as to make them more pliable and free from ice. Despite all this, I had not forgotten my pack of beaver skins and I at once hastened to the rescue of this precious freight, the property of my employer. Thanks to the instinct of my dogs I found it a little farther down the bank from where I had myself escaped the fury of ice and current. I fastened it in a tree which was of such unusual shape as to be easily recognized by a searching party from Fort Dauphin.

Starting out again, I soon came to an immense plain extending on this side, directly up to the lake shore. Here there was a deep bay and I venture to say without

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any exaggeration, many thousands of birds, swans, bustards, cranes, wild geese and ducks, all within easy gunshot, but, alas! I had no such desirable weapon. I was in despair, but what could I do? For fully ten minutes I watched them sporting at their bath in the water, then, approaching near enough to attract their attention, discordant cries rent the air on every side and a great flock took to the air with a deafening roar of wings. It was like a big black cloud passing over the disk of the sun and obscuring its light for at least five minutes. Never had I witnessed such a sight. Later, of course, on other excursions, the scene recurred again and again. Arrived at the place where I was to pass the night, I hastily prepared a good fire and warmed myself, for I was still chilly from my icy bath of the morning. I had no kind of covering at my disposal to make a bed, so I remained near the fire all night, seated between my two dogs whose warmth of fleece I envied. When by chance sleep got the better of me, my dreams were anything but pleasant. Early in the morning I resumed my journey and reached Fort Dauphin at three o'clock in the afternoon, exceedingly tired and almost famished, clear water having been my only sustenance since I left the Indians.

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Mr. McMurray was not expecting me until May and was much surprised when he saw me, but having listened to my story and heard the reasons for my hasty return he expressed approval and immediately dispatched four trusty fellows in search of my interpreter and his two companions, and a fifth to bring in the pack of beaver skins I had left in the tree after my momentous crossing of the small river, as I have already related. These men had a perilous journey because of the condition of the trails and they reached the mountain only to find the camp deserted. A few tent poles were all that was left lying about.

To return to the events that followed the sorcery of the chief and my precipitate departure; that very night the Gros Ventres pounced upon them, with about equal slaughter on both sides. The men whom I had left went with the old people and the women to a distant camp of the Sonnants and returned to Fort Dauphin eight or ten days after my return; those sent by Mr. McMurray came back later without having met them. It was the interpreter who told me what had happened after I left.

My sufferings on this last expedition brought on a high fever and the inflamma-

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tion in my legs was worse than ever. For fifteen days I was unable to move and I had nothing to eat but some dried cherries, an excellent hygienic regimen in its way but not exactly nourishing. As May progressed I was feeling better, and taking my gun I went out a short distance from the fort in quest of game. As good luck would have it, I killed a pheasant, a bird resembling a partridge, and brought it in to my companions, happy in the thought of giving them some fresh meat, for they were nearly as weak as I was myself. That no part of the bird might be wasted, it was plucked and put in the pot whole with some *asquibois* roots. It made a fine broth dark green in color and deliciously bitter. There were fifteen of us to share the feast and it is enough to say that all fared liberally and that our hunger was appeased by this plentiful repast!

A few days after this I told Mr. McMurray that since I was so helpless I had decided to return to Lower Canada. It would be better for the Company than to hold a young man to his engagement who was only an expense, not to say a positive detriment. Seeing how ill I really was the good man gave me every assistance in my preparation for the journey home and was so thoughtful

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as to give me the following statement to hand to my father:

Fort Dauphin, May 24, 1804

Sir

Not having the honor of your acquaintance I take the liberty, by the bearer, Mr. Thomas de Boucherville, your son, of addressing to you a few words exempting him from any blame whatever. I assure you that he is leaving us solely on account of the trouble in his legs, from which he suffers continually when obliged to walk long distances, and not because of any improper conduct or injudicious deportment for or against the interests of the Company. Pardon me, Sir, for the liberty I take in thus intruding upon your notice but courtesy to your son impels me to do him justice.

I remain, Sir, with respect,

Your servant,

Thomas McMurray¹³

To Mr. René A. De Boucherville.

¹³ Thomas McMurray, the author's benefactor, was born at Montreal about the years 1778-79. He entered upon the fur trade in early manhood and eventually (1816) became a partner in the North West Company. He continued his activities after the union of the North West and Hudson's Bay companies, finally retiring in 1843.

In 1771 Tobias Isenhardt, a Detroit trader, was murdered by his clerk, Michael Due, and the corpse

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Without such a statement I would never have dared to show myself before my worthy parent, who never allowed anything to interfere with what he called duty. But strangely enough now that I was fortified with the permit to return, and held in my hands the certificate which testified to the true reason for my going, and made it wholly justifiable, all at once I was beset by a thousand conflicting emotions.

What would people say when they saw me returning so soon? I was a coward, surely, and could not bring myself to do my duty. Danger and privation frightened me and I could no longer face such terror. True, I had the certificate testifying to the cause of my withdrawal from the service of the company, but might not this limb trouble be only a pretext in spite of everything? Very well, I would go on. The torture of these long tramps, both while on the march and afterwards, I would bear it all. For

was buried under the floor of its defunct owner's house. Suspicion centered on Due, who was eventually tried and hanged at Montreal for his crime. It seems probable that Thomas McMurray was the son of Thomas McMurray, Sr. and the widow of Isenhardt, whom he married in 1772. See *Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflets*, IV, 39, and W. Stewart Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company* (Toronto, 1934), 483.

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whose word but my own was accountable? Had I a trifle more determination, more strength of will, the pains would disappear perhaps? I ought not to give up. My reputation would suffer enormously by any false step. Long nights through I was a prey to these delirious fancies.

At length, however, I realized the source of my trouble and what it was that had induced me to ask for my release. There was indeed the passionate longing to embrace my father and mother and to see all the family again, but more than anything else I felt I must find some occupation less trying to my health. All these carried the day, and I held firmly to my first resolve.

The month of May was drawing to a close before I began my preparation to leave Fort Dauphin. Mr. McMurray gave me six good men whose time with the Company had expired and who were desirous of going to the Grand Portage to meet those who had wintered at the other posts. A supply of provisions had just come in, so he had us store away a bag of pemmican and a cake of lard. We had also a net to set for fishing, to supplement by this means, if possible, our small supply of food, which must last us until we reached the shallows of the Winnipeg River. It was still May when we left the fort,

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and with infinite sorrow I said Good-bye to my good friend, Mr. McMurray.

We were all voluntary companions for this voyage, no one having any more authority than another. All in the canoe were on the same footing and I did my share of the work the same as the others. The fourth day we reached Lake Winnipeg with our provisions already exhausted, having been unsuccessful so far in fishing. In fact, hunger had been our inseparable companion. One evening, as we camped on an island, we stretched the net and had a fairly good haul. That was a feast, indeed. Much encouraged, we set out again the next morning. In the course of the day, what was our joy, famished creatures as we were, to see a column of smoke rising in the air at a little distance and to hasten our course we pulled harder than ever at the oars. As we drew near to an island two men, attracted by our singing, came to meet us on the shore, and stepping from the boat I noticed a canvas tent on the outskirts of the wood, which I immediately recognized as belonging to the North West Company. I was impatient to know the occupant—De Rocheblave,¹⁴ someone told me. I then went for-

¹⁴ Pierre Rastel, Sieur de Rocheblave, partner and long prominent in the affairs of the North West Com-

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ward to greet him and as soon as he learned who I was he received me most kindly for he was well acquainted with my father. He begged me to remain with him for the day but this was impossible because of my companions. I told him, however, how we had suffered for want of provisions and he made us a present of a bag of pemmican and some grease to prepare it. We left this gentleman's camp in the afternoon and on the third day were at the shallows of the river.

Here I transferred my canoe to the care of the Commandant and re-embarked in one of the big canoes called rabasca, which come from the more distant posts and are on their way to the Grand Portage. As it was not loaded, we made good time and reached the Portage with neither discomfort nor fatigue, the two great drawbacks to life in the Upper Country, as it is called.

pany. He was a son of Philippe François Rastel, Sieur de Rocheblave, commandant in the Illinois country at the time of George Rogers Clark's invasion of it. Clark sent him a prisoner to Williamsburg, Va., whence he eventually escaped by evading his parole. See *The Conquest of the Illinois*, the Lakeside Classics volume for 1920, *passim*. Pierre Rocheblave gradually withdrew from fur trade activities, beginning in 1816, and resided at Montreal, where he held important political offices and was a prominent citizen generally until his death in 1840.

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It was now the end of June and we spent some days resting and wandering about, waiting for the Company's schooner, *Perseverance*, which makes the passage of Lake Superior. Our orders were to go aboard as soon as she weighed anchor. Several clerks who were returning to Canada embarked with us, besides a member of the North West Company named Thain¹⁵ with twelve of his voyageurs. His canoe was also put on board. July had arrived before the anchor was raised and after a twelve days' voyage, at times in the face of contrary winds though with none of the hurricanes often prevalent at that season, the vessel arrived at Sault Ste. Marie.

Mr. Thain asked me if I would like to accompany him to Mackinac, or did I wish to go direct to Montreal. Thinking I might never have another opportunity to see this

¹⁵ Thomas Thain was a native of Scotland and a nephew of John Richardson, who was long prominent in the Montreal fur trade. How long Thain had been in America prior to the author's contact with him is unknown. He was long active in the conduct of the Northwest fur trade, both in the interior and at Montreal. Business reverses and ill health eventually assailed him; he returned to Scotland, where he died in 1838, and where for a time he was an inmate of an asylum for the insane. See Wallace, *Docs. Relating to the North West Company*, 501-502.

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noted post, I accepted the invitation with pleasure.

The post of Mackinac is strongly built; there are also several fine dwelling houses, and some storehouses belonging to the Company of the South. An American fortress commands the approach. I was acquainted with several families living here and was rejoiced to hear that my brother, Pierre de Boucherville, had come in on his way to the Illinois country. I went at once to see him and his surprise was not less than my own that we should find each other in this far-away land, so difficult to reach.

The third day of our stay here Mr. Thain notified me to be in readiness to leave in his canoe. It was near the end of August, 1804, and we traveled so rapidly that in less than twelve days after leaving Mackinac we set foot in Montreal,¹⁶ not without a feeling, for

¹⁶ This was, undoubtedly, rapid traveling. The great Simon McTavish, however, set a record of $7\frac{3}{4}$ days for the journey from Fort St. Joseph to Montreal. Lieutenant George Landmann, a young British army officer of sporting proclivities, determined to lower this record. He bought a light canoe, 25 feet in length, and engaged a famous guide and nine other picked voyageurs. Providence provided a favoring wind on Lake Huron, and Landmann established the all-time canoe record from St. Joseph to Montreal of $7\frac{3}{4}$ days. Considered purely as a sporting event, with no gallery to cheer him

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me, at least, of joyous gladness. I went the next day to the new North West Company, on whom I was dependent for my regular discharge, and found there was no objection. Mr. Thain gave me some money to buy clothes that I might present a good appearance before my family in Boucherville.

In passing through the old market I bought from an old woman a little pie that looked especially tempting. This I hid as well as I could in my coat, intending it for a treat at a more convenient moment, not having even seen a bit of pastry for so many months. What was my surprise and disgust on breaking it open to find the contents so utterly different from what I had expected. I may not be credited when I say that my pie was made of a barnyard rat! The feast I had anticipated turned to sickening loathing and my appetite was entirely appeased!

As I went on I saw a merchant standing in the door of his shop and I asked him to direct me to the new market. "Young man," he said, "have you not just come in from the Northwest?" In all innocence I replied "You can see that easily enough by my clothes!" He then began to whisper in my

on, this exploit was superb. To adjust it to our author's journey, one may allow the latter perhaps a day to cover the distance from Mackinac to St. Joseph.

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ear the most alluring inducements and so well did he succeed that I entered his shop and spent all my money. I bought a pair of olive-colored corduroy trousers, a red jacket, and a waistcoat of the same material as my trousers. I was penniless.

Thus gaily appareled, I took passage that afternoon for Boucherville, my native village and the scene of my youthful follies. My mother welcomed me with great joy but my father was very grave. I did not know what to make of it, when suddenly an idea seized me, and I quickly took out my pocketbook and handed him Mr. McMurray's letter. This precious document had a marvellous effect and I was now received by the head of the family with all his customary kindness.

Though comfortably settled now at home and enjoying all the delights of family intercourse, I became more and more distraught and anxious. My mother was quick to notice this change in me and one day she took me aside and begged me to tell her the trouble. I said everything I could to relieve her mind but at length was obliged to admit that I was apprehensive about the future; that here I was doing nothing; that I wanted to go into business but knew not to whom to apply, for I had no acquaintances in trade, and lastly

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that I dare not ask my dear father to interest himself in my behalf, seeing how much trouble I had given him by my foolish pranks even before my departure for the Upper Country. Always tenderly sympathetic, my mother promised to intercede for me with my father. The change in me was so marked that my father could not but notice it, yet it was a long time before he would consider my case and my mother used every possible entreaty before she could persuade him to do anything for me. She succeeded, however, and came to me with the good news. In some magical manner I seemed reborn, and a new sun appeared above my horizon.

By a happy coincidence, a gentleman of French origin, who had come to Canada a few years earlier with a group of royalist friends, among whom was the Count de Puisaye,¹⁷ conceived the idea of settling here.

¹⁷ The Count de Puisaye, born in 1755, was a prominent upholder of the royalist cause in the French Revolution and leader of the ill-fated Quiberon expedition of 1795. Along with other royalists he found asylum in England, where in 1798 he undertook to establish for himself and a large number of associates a new and final home in Canada. His efforts led to the establishment of the French Royalist colony of Windham about twenty miles north of Toronto in 1799. For a number of reasons, including internal dissensions, the enterprise proved a failure, and in 1802 Puisaye went back to

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He was paying a visit to my brother-in-law, Lieutenant Colonel de Lery,¹⁸ with whom he had important business relations, and he was also slightly acquainted with my father. His name was Quetton de St. George and he lived in the little town of York, now known as Toronto. One day when he was dining at our house the conversation incidentally touched on trade and he remarked that he was about to lose a valuable clerk, who was leaving him as soon as he returned to York, and he was looking for a young Canadian

England, where he died in 1827. During the life of his American enterprise he lived on the Canadian side of Niagara River about three miles above Queenston, where he built a home in 1799. See Wallace, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, and references therein cited.

¹⁸ Colonel de Lery, brother-in-law of the author, belonged to one of the most distinguished military families of Canada. His grandfather was a military engineer, pupil of Vauban, who was employed in fortifying Quebec and Montreal. His father, also a military engineer, was at Detroit in 1749, where he drew the best known early-day map of the city, and at Fort Duquesne in 1754, where he penned perhaps the best contemporary account of the humiliating surrender of George Washington and his Virginia army to the conquering French-Indian force. Colonel de Lery served many years in the French army in Europe, but in 1794 returned to Canada, where he spent the remainder of his life. He married Charlotte Boucher de Boucherville, sister of Verchères, May 20, 1799. See Wallace, *Dict. Can. Biography* and references therein cited.

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to replace him; the clerk's name was Vigneau and his home was also in Boucherville.

My mother, whose foresight nothing escaped, seized the ball on the rebound and promptly asked Mr. St. George if he would not like to employ me. He turned to me and asked if hardship had any fears for me? I replied with some spirit that I feared neither poverty nor hard work, and that I knew something of both, having lived at close quarters with them in the Northwest. The arrangements were concluded ere we rose from the table and I was given three days in which to prepare for my journey.

Again I left the paternal roof, this time in October, 1804. Mr. St. George sent me on to Lachine with a letter to his agent, Mr. Grant, saying that he wished the boats to be ready the next morning. He himself arrived early and by eleven o'clock we were off, with our boats well loaded. The voyage was uneventful as far as Kingston, formerly known as Frontenac or Cataraqui. This is a fine place, well suited for a harbor. Here Mr. St. George took me to see a friend, who was also a French émigré, named de Boiton. Mr. St. George told me, too, of a Mr. Foretier who lived here and whom I wished to see, for he had served with my brother-in-law, Mr. de Lery, and my brother, in the

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Royal Canadians. Mr. St. George accompanied me and we were heartily welcomed by this gentleman, who had sons living at Detroit.

The day following our departure from Kingston the wind blew so violently that I thought the boat would capsize any minute; with short, high waves, now up, now down, producing motions which were exceedingly distressing. But the voyage was short, for the powerful gale was in our favor. Having anchored in the bay at York, we landed without delay and were soon at the house which was to be my home.

I soon became acquainted with my fellow-clerks in the store; John Dettor, bookkeeper, John McDonald, senior clerk, and Edward Vigneau, whose place I was taking. They were all very kind to me while I remained with them. It was the rule of the house that the young clerks should perform the severest tasks in the shop, and for a year I had my full share of them. Details are superfluous, but I would like to say here that any young man who would faithfully do his duty must never hesitate at any task assigned him provided it conforms to his conscience.

In the fall, after the new goods were disposed of, I spent some days with the Count de Chalus and his brother, the Viscount.

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They were also French émigrés, friends of Mr. St. George, who lived twelve or fifteen miles from York.

The winter passed without any unusual event and I had every reason to think that my employer was satisfied with me. In July, 1805, a man who owed Mr. St. George a large sum of money left the country. He asked me if I felt capable of pursuing him, adding that by going by way of Niagara and Fort Erie I might possibly overtake him at Buffalo, on American soil. I replied in the affirmative, the more readily as the rascal had only two days the start of me. I was provided with a warrant for his arrest in case I should be lucky enough to catch him, and I set off with a friend, Mr. Cameron, in a small Indian canoe supplied us by some Mississaugas. It was about four in the afternoon and very calm when we started in our frail craft to cross for Niagara, thirty miles distant. We had a compass to guide us and a lantern with a candle to give the light necessary to watch the needle so that we might not deviate from a direct course. I chose the night time for the dangerous crossing because in summer nights scarcely a breath of wind ruffles the surface of the water. About midnight something high loomed up before our canoe. I asked

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Mr. Cameron what he supposed it was. He said it seemed to him to be the masts of a vessel that was becalmed and waiting for a favorable breeze. We approached quietly and when near enough I hailed the ship. The watchman answered, "*Toronto.*" Captain Hall was in command and he kindly asked us aboard, where we soon found ourselves, but he could not conceal his surprise, nor could he refrain from something of a lecture at our temerity, foolhardiness was more like it, in venturing such a distance out on the lake in a little bark canoe. If a wind should spring up we were sure to go to the bottom and nevermore be counted among the living. He treated us to a glass of excellent wine, and we continued on our journey to Niagara, which was still fifteen or eighteen miles distant, according to Captain Hall's reckoning. At sunrise we could see the outline of the high coast, but still so far away that it seemed to recede before us as we approached it.

At Niagara Mr. Farcy took me to see Count de Puisaye, who fitted me out with a good strong horse. Without waiting to eat breakfast I started for Chippewa and while resting here a few minutes I had the good fortune to learn that my quarry had passed through that same morning on his

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way to Fort Erie. I remounted my horse and set off at a more rapid pace than before so as to reach Fort Erie as soon as possible. After a long and exhausting ride, at nine in the evening I pulled up at an inn where, to my unbounded relief, I found my man seated tranquilly at supper. The hotel was called the Front.

Immediately, in the presence of two witnesses I read the warrant and had the absconder arrested in the name of His Majesty. He passed the night under guard of my two men and the next day was conducted to the prison at Niagara, and from here to the one at Toronto.

Having completed this difficult and arduous task, I left Fort Erie for the establishment of Count de Puisaye and from there to Niagara, where Mr. Cameron awaited my return with an anxiety easily imagined, especially as the *Toronto* was on the eve of sailing for York. This time we shipped our canoe and took passage ourselves with feelings of the utmost relief and satisfaction. I cannot but admit that such were my sentiments when I again met Mr. St. George. The success that had crowned my efforts and the news of the arrest of the defaulter gave him keen enjoyment. From now on he treated me with absolute confidence.

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In the month of September I had the ill luck to fall sick with ague. Every day, about two in the afternoon, I was seized with a headache and severe pains between my shoulders, followed by a chill that shook the bed on which I lay, despite the abundant and heavy covering. This lasted about two hours without cessation, followed by a burning fever which threw me into a dripping perspiration. For three long months I was the victim of these wearing effects of the disease, then little by little the attacks became less violent and frequent, until at last they ceased altogether and I was able to resume my duties at the store. That region is known to be a hotbed of malaria, and very few people who remain there any length of time escape its ravages.

As the winter progressed I was given charge of the trade in peltries with the Mississauga Indians and I grew daily in the favor of my employer. Our business increased also, and every evening found us busy with invoices and accounts. Our trade included shipments to England, the United States, and Montreal, and when spring came and the inventories had been completed they showed a profit to Mr. St. George of almost eighty thousand dollars.

The daily routine with the inhabitants of the place kept us on our feet from five in

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the morning until ten or eleven at night. In the spring Mr. St. George went to New York to buy goods for the summer trade, and was gone almost two months. One morning while he was still absent I had just opened up the store when I saw a feeble old man and woman passing whom Mr. McDonald, the chief clerk, told me were fortune tellers. Despite the early hour both of them were rather drunk. To have a little amusement before beginning the toil of the day I asked them in, speaking poor English, for I had not yet had time to master the language. They told me that I was about to go on a journey, and many other things, but on the whole my horoscope was not bad.

On his return from New York Mr. St. George told me of a plan he had in mind of sending me to Amherstburg to open a branch store. He had an idea that we would do a good business there, considering the class of people in the neighborhood and the style in which they lived. I was not very anxious to go, for I was much attached to this gentleman and did not like the thought of leaving him. But he seemed so fixed in his resolve that I accepted his offer and having selected a stock of merchandise to the value of £2500 sterling, I took my departure for Amherstburg.

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I went to Niagara, and from there to Queenston, where I arranged with a local merchant for the transport of my goods to Fort Erie. Here I remained twelve days at the Front Hotel, awaiting the arrival of a vessel bound for Detroit. At last one appeared, flying the American flag and commanded by Captain Lee.¹⁹ The ship was loaded with furs belonging to the North West Company, which were being forwarded by Angus McIntosh,²⁰ one of the Com-

¹⁹ This was William Lee, one of the earliest American vessel owners and navigators on Lake Erie. The British had sailing vessels on the Upper Lakes for a generation before the advent of American enterprise in this field. Lee (who may have been an Englishman) was a lake captain at least from 1795 to 1812. Among the vessels he commanded (and some of which he built) were the *Erie Packet*, the *Good Intent*, the *Contractor*, and the *Friend's Good Will*. The *Good Intent*, a thirty-ton sloop, built by Captain Lee in 1799, was probably the vessel on which Verchères sailed. She was lost with all on board off Point Abino near the eastern end of Lake Erie in 1816.

²⁰ Angus McIntosh was born in Inverness, Scotland, in 1762. His father was head of the McIntosh Clan, and both parents had actively supported the cause of Prince Charles Edward Stuart in his efforts to recover the throne of his ancestors. The rebellion failed and the family estate of McIntosh was forfeited. Angus came to Canada and Detroit as a young man and for nearly half a century was a merchant and prominent resident of this community. Following the American occupation in 1796 he established his home and business on the

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pany's agents, and the Captain had orders to return to Detroit as soon as his vessel could load. This exactly suited me, and I lost no time in getting my goods on board.

The ship was a well-built schooner, with ample canvas, making her an unusually fast sailer, so that on the third day after leaving Fort Erie we came in sight of Amherstburg, where our vessel soon cast anchor. The Captain landed immediately for clearance with the customs and a moment after a long-boat with several people aboard put off from the shore and came alongside. What was my surprise to recognize among them an old college friend, Mr. Maisonville,²¹

Canadian side of the river, opposite the lower end of Belle Isle, in eastern present-day Windsor. In 1783 he married a member of the ancient Navarre family of Detroit. In 1827, now about seventy years of age, he returned to Scotland to enter into belated possession of his ancestral estate and dignity. The family is still prominent in Scotland and elsewhere.

²¹ The Maisonville family has been associated with the Detroit River area since the time of Cadillac. One of the prisoners upon whom George Rogers Clark inflicted war-time atrocities at Vincennes in 1779 was a Maisonville. The individual who was the friend of Verchères was one of the several sons of Alexis Loranger *dit* Maisonville, who came to Detroit River about 1770 and in 1773 married, as his second wife, Margaret Joncaire de Chabert. Alexis Maisonville lived at Petite Côte, below Sandwich. He was buried at Sandwich, Sept. 16, 1814.

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whose father and mine were also friends. I was also introduced to a young man named Frederic Rolette,²² who was a clerk for Mr. Robert Reynolds.²³

²² Charles Frederic Rolette, whose exploit (presently to be described) of capturing the American packet *Cuyahoga* constituted the initial hostile act of the War of 1812, was born at Quebec in 1783. He was already a veteran seaman, having entered the Royal Navy at an early age and served under Lord Nelson in the battles of the Nile and Trafalgar. He served actively throughout the War of 1812 on the western front. He commanded one of Barclay's ships in the Battle of Lake Erie, was wounded at Frenchtown, and taken prisoner in the Battle of the Thames. He died at Quebec, March 17, 1831.

²³ Robert Reynolds was born at Detroit in 1781, his father being Thomas Reynolds, barrack-master for many years at Detroit and (subsequently) Amherstburg. Robert, who was still a young man when Verchères came to Amherstburg, had recently married (Nov. 16, 1803) Therese Bouchette Desrivières, widow of Thomas Hypolite Desrivières, a young army officer who had been killed in a duel in 1801. He was a stepson of James McGill, the great Montreal merchant (founder of McGill University), and besides his widow he left a child (James McGill Desrivières), who of course became the stepson of Reynolds. Robert Reynolds built (possibly with money received from the McGill estate) an imposing Georgian mansion, which is still beautifully preserved, facing the river road just below Amherstburg. His old-age recollections of the War of 1812 are recorded in Wm. F. Coffin's *1812: the War and its Moral* (Montreal, 1864).

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As soon as Captain Lee had made his report he returned to the vessel and set about unloading my merchandise, and storing it in a warehouse belonging to Mr. William Duff, a merchant of the place, until such time as I could open a store of my own. I now set about finding a good business location, at the same time making inquiries concerning the general trend of trade here, to see what hopes I might entertain of success. These were not of the brightest; money was scarce and merchants for the most part bartered their goods for corn, flour, and other products. All this was somewhat discouraging and I began to fear that I would not be able to dispose of my merchandise to the advantage of my patron.

One day I was walking back and forth on the balcony of the house where I was staying on Queen Street, feeling gloomy and depressed, when young Rolette, who lived near by, came in to see me. We were almost the same age, and had conceived a mutual attraction. I learned that he was from Quebec and was distantly allied to the old and respectable Bouchette family, and that Mr. Reynolds, by whom he was employed, had married a Miss Bouchette. From this time we were united in a friendship which ceased only with his death. He became a lieutenant

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in the Royal Navy during the War of 1812, in which he commanded His Majesty's brig, *Lady Prevost*.

At last I rented a large room that would do both for store and living quarters and here I displayed my goods to the best advantage possible. They had been carefully selected and proved very suitable. To my great surprise, and that of all the inhabitants of the place, on the very first day I opened my store I sold more than two hundred dollars' worth, and this continued throughout the entire summer.

On my first Sunday in Amherstburg I called on Mr. Jacques Baby, who was not a stranger to me, as I had met him at my father's house. I also called on Father Marchand,²⁴ who lived at Sandwich, about eighteen miles from Amherstburg. I arrived during High Mass. From no indifference on my part, but simply because there was no church to attend, I had not gone to any religious service since leaving Boucherville. I was much affected, therefore, as I

²⁴ Rev. Jean Baptiste Marchand was Superior of the College of Montreal when upon the death of Father Dufaux, parish priest at Sandwich, he was appointed to the latter station. He arrived at Sandwich on Christmas day, 1796, and served the parish continuously until his death, April 14, 1825.

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entered this one, and I listened devoutly to the remainder of the mass and to the sermon that followed. At the close of the service I went to greet the worthy father. He remembered having seen me at the College of Montreal when he was its Director, although I was then but ten years old. The year after my enrollment in this excellent school he had been sent to Amherstburg as a missionary, where he died in 1825. I also called at the home of Mr. Maisonville, senior, feeling confident that I would find there a young lady of the family who had visited us at Boucherville some years previously, when on her way to the Ursuline Convent at Quebec. She was related to our former cure, Father Conroy, on the Chabert side. Her visit had been made in 1801, the year our church at Boucherville was built.

My business continued to prosper and I made my returns regularly to Mr. St. George through his agents, who furnished me with bills of exchange on the house of Inglis, Ellice & Co. of London, and on the Commissary-General, Mr. Robinson, of Quebec.

Here I shall digress from my own affairs for a moment to give a short description of Amherstburg and its environs.

Not even in the south of France nor in Italy—countries internationally famous as

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health resorts—are there many places to compare with the region lying on both sides of the Detroit River. The climate is temperate, and even the most barren soil is covered with fruit trees of every kind: apples, pears, peaches, apricots, plums, all yield abundantly and have a delicious flavor. The land is generally fertile, and a splendid river, issuing from Lake Superior, here joins its waters with those of Lake Erie. The river teems with fish, as well as with aquatic game. The buildings on the British side are good but they do not compare with those on the American shore in the Territory of Michigan. Amherstburg is the home port of the Royal Navy, whose vessels cruise over Lake Erie and Lake Huron. The garrison is quite strong. From June to September the Indians gather here to receive their presents from the British government, and at times more than a thousand are assembled representing the different tribes. At such times the streets are crowded with painted warriors and God alone knows what scenes are enacted, especially when, like big, unruly children, they indulge in a drunken orgy.

In the spring of 1808 Mr. St. George wrote to me asking if I would not like to go into business on my own account. He said he wished to reward me for the many services

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I had rendered him, and at the same time he assured me that he would be my security with the merchants of Montreal and New York for my merchandise. Needless to say, I accepted this kind offer. Accordingly, I took an inventory of the goods on hand and reported it to him. Without going into details, I can say that my little store always repaid me handsomely. For the year 1810 my sales amounted to eight thousand dollars. In August, 1811, I went to York and from here Mr. St. George accompanied me to Montreal to buy goods.

With what joy I looked forward to seeing my father and mother who, thanks to Mr. St. George for his good report of me, awaited my coming with open arms. The day after our arrival at Montreal I repaired to Boucherville, leaving my kind companion to follow as soon as he had finished the business he had in hand. Great was the rejoicing at home. Mr. St. George rejoined me there and was with us several days.

As I have mentioned above, this gentleman was French by birth and consequently shared in the gaiety of his countrymen. We had a happy time in the fullest sense of the word during his stay with us. His business affairs were considerable and he had counting houses in different places, one at York

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under the direction of Messrs. Baldwin and Jules Quesnel, another at Niagara with Mr. Despard in charge, and a third at the head of Lake Ontario managed by J. McKay. He therefore went to Montreal for his mail. There he found a letter from his clerk at Niagara and the same evening he returned to Boucherville a different man. He was very pale and his usual gaiety had given place to an icy reserve of manner. I knew that he was upset but I hesitated to ask him the cause. When we had retired to our own rooms I ventured to inquire what bad news he had received at Montreal to make him so distressed. He hesitated a moment and then said: "I know I can trust you. I am a ruined man. Read that but do not breathe a word to anyone." The letter he handed me was from Mr. Despard and read as follows: "Sir—I beg to inform you that your merchants of New York and Schenectady have shipped to your order, per Messrs. Walton and Co., some goods valued at fifty-eight thousand dollars and these are now held up by the customs at Lewiston, on the American side. That government is strictly enforcing the Embargo law and your goods are not allowed to come into Canada."

Our private conversations caused my poor mother to suspect that something serious

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had happened, and my refusal to answer her questions disturbed her greatly. I was so upset all that day that I gave scarcely any heed to the story my father was telling me of his own voyages to Detroit when I was a child. He had gone there by water and had been shipwrecked at Point Pelee²⁵ on Lake Erie. I knew this place very well (it is about forty miles from Amherstburg) for I traded there with the Indians whom I employed to hunt for bear and wild cats, which are numerous in that vicinity; but my thoughts wandered from the subject and all the time my father was entertaining me with his talk my mind was elsewhere, and I was forming a resolution which honor itself seemed to dictate to me. I interrupted my father's narrative to say that I thought I must leave home again very soon as I was getting anxious about my store. I had left it in charge of a clerk who was rather inexperienced and my trade might suffer were I longer away. My father approved my decision but my mother was obdurate. Never-

²⁵ Point Pelee, which juts out several miles into Lake Erie near its western end, is the southernmost point of the mainland of Canada; Pelee Island, which lies some miles out in the lake, represents the southern extreme of territory under Canadian rule. Point Pelee is now a Dominion National Park.

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theless I succeeded in consoling her to the extent of reconciling her somewhat to my sudden departure and I left home, promising to return the following year.

Mr. St. George could not accompany me at this time for he had a good deal of business to transact at Montreal but as we separated I assured him that he would hear from me when I reached Niagara. He did not seem to understand me.

My mind was made up. I was determined to spare no effort to recover the goods illegally confiscated and detained at Lewiston by the Americans. On my arrival at Kingston I got a boat for Niagara, had a quick voyage, and on landing hurried away to interview Mr. Despard. He was very glad to see me and asked whether Mr. St. George had received his letter. I replied in the affirmative, adding that the latter believed himself completely ruined, but that I had hastened back with the sole object of aiding to recover the goods; I had said nothing of this to him, save that as I wrung his hand in parting I had told him that he would hear from me at Niagara.

Mr. Despard gave me all the information I needed to lay my plan of attack. He had been at Lewiston the very day the goods were unloaded from the vessel but no ques-

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tion had been raised in his presence about the regularity of the shipment. He knew personally that the goods had all been stored in a shed which stood at the water's edge and the customs officer slept on the second floor, usually leaving the trap door open which communicated to the floor below. A serious obstacle to the success of my project was the presence of two vessels which were moored to the wharf. After listening attentively to his recital, I told him that here was a chance to do some smuggling some night and I went out to think matters over. For several hours I paced the shore, trying to collect my thoughts and form some plan of action, for I was determined to leave nothing undone to recover the goods of my benefactor.

After a time I noticed a man near me who appeared to be a foreigner. He, too, was pacing back and forth, and for a moment I thought I recognized him as General Moreau, one of Napoleon's officers, whom I had met on the stage going from Fort Erie to Queenston to view the Falls of Niagara. So steadily did I regard him that he in turn noticed me, and approaching asked me in English if I were a foreigner. "No." I replied, "I have just come from Boucherville in Lower Canada." "But I am well acquainted with

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a gentleman of that name," he said, "who is an ensign in the Royal Canadians. I too had the honor of belonging to this regiment. My name is Chinic, and I am from Quebec."

We conversed for a time and he asked me several questions, finally coming out bluntly, "What is it you have in mind that you are so absorbed? Have you a scheme of any kind on hand?" I could not avoid answering him in the affirmative. He then begged me to take him into my confidence, promising on his honor to aid me in any way possible.

I then disclosed to him my bold design of crossing over to the American side the next night, and said that he could accompany me if he cared to do so. "But what is the object of this nocturnal visit," he asked. I now told him that I was acting as a friend of Mr. St. George to whom I was deeply indebted, and that I wished at a single stroke to render him the important service of rescuing his merchandise and preserving his credit. "Why, he is one of my closest friends," he replied, "he has helped me in many ways in recent years, and I shall be only too glad to join you in the enterprise."

Without delay we returned together to the house of Mr. Despard and there laid our plans. We decided to engage a number

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of discreet, trusty Canadians with several boats, in one of which we would place a ladder for use in mounting to the second floor of the building where the customs officer lived. We would each have a small whistle for use in case it became necessary to give an alarm, and weapons for defense in case of attack. The crossing was to be made a little above the village of Queenston and as soon as we reached the American side some of our men were to be stationed as a guard.

The next day the men we had engaged came to us a few at a time, as had been agreed, so as not to excite suspicion. They were all solemnly sworn to secrecy and I treated them to my best, although no one was allowed to leave the house again for fear of treason. We were about forty in number, and I could scarcely keep from laughing as I remembered the farce I had played on them. The so-called Evangel to which they had religiously applied their lips was nothing but an ordinary spelling-book.

After telling them what was on foot, I promised each of them ten dollars for the night's work. Forty dollars were paid to a man named Lambert who supplied a large boat, and twenty dollars for each additional boat.

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At eight o'clock in the evening the expedition left Niagara for Fort George, where the garrison was stationed. Here the sentinel placed every boat under guard as the Commandant had given strict orders that no small craft should pass after nine in the evening, the Embargo being already in force and the two countries on the eve of a rupture. The sergeant of the guard informed me that on no account could he allow a single boat to pass, but if I wished to see the Commandant about it he would be glad to take me to him. To this I readily agreed. It was Colonel Procter of the Forty-first Regiment of the line, who at the moment was playing a game of cards with some ladies.

I asked him for permission to take only such boats as belonged to the inhabitants of the place. He wanted to know what I was up to? I replied candidly that I intended to cross the river to recover the goods belonging to Mr. Quetton de St. George, which the American authorities had unlawfully seized. On hearing this he ordered the sergeant to let me have the boats, and on bidding me good-bye wished me complete success. I was most sincere in my thanks. The men went to get the boats, wrapping the oars in cloth to deaden the sound as they dipped in the water. Despard, Chinic

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and I then gave each man a half-measure of rum to stimulate them for the execution of their difficult task.

There was a blockhouse at the foot of the hill at this place, on the river bank, and I asked the sentinel if he would loan me a long ladder of which I stood in need. He handed it over without a question or any hesitation. Everything was now in readiness and we crossed the river at eleven o'clock under cover of a thick darkness. We were all well armed, having only the gallows to face and that right soon if in spite of every precaution we were discovered and taken prisoners. At a quarter of an hour past midnight we landed and followed the path to the warehouse where the goods were stored, having made the necessary dispositions to prevent exposing ourselves to an ambush. We reached the warehouse and placed the ladder at the edge of the second-story window. I was to mount first, followed by Mr. Despard and Mr. Chinic. Believe me, dear reader, I would not have given two cents for my life at that moment, for if by chance the officer was expecting this nocturnal visit, as soon as I appeared at the window I was likely to receive a bullet in the head. Happily for me he was sleeping like a saint. Noiselessly we approached the bed, with our pistols in hand

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not be acknowledged too often. I remained with him a few days and then set out for Amherstburg, where I arrived considerably fatigued.

My business had not suffered by my long absence and I was glad to hear that the Forty-first Regiment had been relieved by the One-hundredth. The officers of the Forty-first were cordially detested by everyone. Colonel Procter was stationed farther up with his regiment, in which, however, there were some good officers, among others, Major Muir, Captain Tallan, Lieutenants Bernard, Bender, Taylor, Troughton, Sutherland, Faulkner, Dixon, and Cadiz, all deserving of mention.

Many important events might be recorded here but unfortunately I have lost my journals and I cannot conscientiously relate them from memory. Nevertheless I can relate an incident that concerns the Indians which possesses considerable interest for its bearing on their sense of justice.

It was the spring of 1812, about the 8th of April, when they came in with their sugar made from the sap of the maple trees, and other products to trade. Three young Ottawa braves from Saginaw entered my store and saying in French that they were our "friends," added: "Our old chief with his family, to

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which we belong, arrived late last evening. He has a quantity of sugar and many skins, muskrats, wildcats and some beaver. He asks if you will come to his tent and sit with him while smoking the pipe of peace. Come at sunrise and do not fail, for he regards you highly. He liked the presents you gave him last fall and he wants to thank you himself and to tell you about the bad conduct of a merchant of this place who deceived him shamefully in selling him washed silverware." It was true that a man named Laferte, a jeweler here, had sold the Indians a lot of silverware, such as necklaces, earrings, bracelets, etc., made of copper with a silver coating.

The next morning I went early to the Indian camp. The chief's tent was easily distinguished by the flag in the doorway and entering I seated myself near him. He was smoking his pipe in solemn state. "Good morning, comrade," I said, to which he responded: "Have you come to visit your brother, the Indian? I am glad to see you and so are my young people. We have much to trade with you this time. The women have made many mococks of sugar but they will not sell it to you. Do not be angry with them, brother, before the sun sets you will know the reason why." He then called the young braves and squaws into his tent and

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said to them: "Take your wares to the *Moniconini* (the Montreal merchant)," the name by which I was known among them. Before I left he wanted to know if "the cows are still giving milk," his way of asking if I would give them some bottles of rum. "Yes," I told him. "*Migouentche* (I thank you)" he replied.

The whole band then came to the store, the women remaining outside according to their custom and the men doing the trading. This took four long hours. They traded about fifteen thousand weight of sugar, a quantity of peltries, and other articles, and when it was all completed came my turn. I made them a present of a score of braces of tobacco, and a ten-gallon barrel of rum, and their joy was unbounded.

But to return to the man called Laferte; although the Indians did not like him, the squaws took him thirty mococks of sugar, receiving in exchange cloth, blankets, and such like. He was only half pleased as his profit on these goods was little enough in any event. The whole trade was in favor of the squaws who were taking their revenge for the washed silver.

Some hours later he passed my store and told me that he had just bought from the women of the head chief Miliomaque a quan-

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tity of sugar which he was now on his way to sell to the mess-sergeant of the regiment, who had asked him that very afternoon if he thought he could get some. He had sent on the sugar to the garrison to be weighed, and was on his way then to conclude the transaction. Later, when I heard what had happened, I was not at all surprised. It seemed the sergeant had emptied each mocock in order to assure himself of the uniform quality of the sugar, and to his astonishment discovered that each one was three-fourths filled with sand. Laferte was obliged to take back both the sugar and the sand, bitterly regretting the cloth and blankets he had traded to the wicked squaws. The copper he had sold for silver the previous autumn had led to this result. Such was one of the characteristics of these poor aborigines, but who can blame them? They learned it from the white man, the so-called Christian!

Part 2

THE WAR OF 1812

THERE had been frequent rumors of hostilities between Great Britain and the United States before the final announcement of June 23 that all bonds of friendship between the two countries were broken and that both had decided to meet in open conflict without further delay. On either side there was manifest a readiness to measure forces and each now waited only a favorable opportunity to begin. Word went abroad that the American Governor Hull was already en route with two thousand soldiers of Kentucky and Virginia to reinforce the garrison of Detroit and to take over the command in place of General Macomb, who, it seemed, failed to inspire confidence.²⁶

²⁶ The author's memory has led him astray here. General Alexander Macomb, although a native of Detroit, did not participate in the war on the north-western frontier. The commandant during General Hull's extended eastern absence in 1811-12 was Captain John Whistler of early Fort Dearborn (1803-10) fame. The soldiers of Hull's army comprised the Fourth U. S. Infantry, which had come West in 1811 to serve in the Tippecanoe campaign, and three regiments and some additional minor units of Ohio militia, newly levied for this expedition.

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This was naturally alarming news for the inhabitants of Amherstburg and they immediately decided to organize a company for guard duty. It was composed of the merchants of the place for the most part. At two o'clock in the afternoon of July 14 a small vessel appeared sailing lightly from the open lake into the mouth of the river but the wind was unfavorable and her speed lessened somewhat. With the aid of a glass it was easily discovered that she carried the American flag, and it seemed probable that her captain was unaware of the knowledge we had, that war had been declared.

Finding myself by chance in the shipyard where the *Queen Charlotte* was under construction, I came upon Lieutenant Frederic Rolette in the act of launching a boat manned by a dozen sailors, all well armed with sabers and pickaxes, and I hastened to ask him where he was going with that array. "To make a capture," he replied, as he ordered his men to row in all haste in the direction of the vessel which was slowly but steadily making her way up the river, all unconscious of the fate awaiting her. I asked some Indians who were standing around if they would follow that boat. They expressed their readiness for the venture and we hurriedly entered one of their canoes, our sole

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weapons being three guns loaded with duck shot and two tomahawks. Rolette's boat reached the vessel's side a few minutes ahead of us and the men boarded her without meeting any resistance. Either the crew was unaware that war had been declared or they were uncertain of the relations between the two countries. The next instant I came up with my Indians and to leap aboard required only a moment. My friend Rolette then ran up the British flag and ordered the American band to play "God save the King." I should have stated that this vessel carried all the musical instruments of Hull's army, besides much of the personal baggage of his men. This was the first prize of the war and it was taken by a young French-Canadian.²⁷

²⁷ Although General Hull knew that war was imminent, it is one of the bizarre facts of America's military effort in this period that the government declared war upon Great Britain without troubling to afford him timely notification of its action. On reaching the Maumee River, in his northward march to Detroit, Hull placed aboard the *Cuyahoga*, a small sailing vessel he found there, a number of sick soldiers, several army wives, the band instruments, and other paraphernalia, including his own military correspondence. The seizure of this vessel, well-described by our author, marked the beginning of actual hostilities in the war. The amateurish state of mind in which America embarked upon the conflict is illustrated by the action of Hull, upon reaching Detroit, in sending Colonel Cass to Amherstburg to

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General Hull and his army made slow progress, being obliged to open a road for his wagons and artillery. Every evening at sunset he caused a cannon to be fired which we could hear distinctly from the moment he reached River Raisin, known now as Frenchtown.²⁸

During the following week a party of Indians crossed the river on their way to Brownstown where the Hurons had had a village before the breaking out of hostilities. When the war began they had evacuated the place and crossed the river to place themselves under the British flag. The object of the party in question was to reconnoiter the

ask the British authorities to return to the Americans much of the property they had seized with the vessel.

²⁸ Detroit was the mother settlement of all the area adjoining the western end of Lake Erie. Settlers from Detroit established themselves on the Raisin River about the close of the American Revolution, without troubling to give their community a formal name. The name Frenchtown would have no particular significance to French settlers, and was obviously a Yankee designation. In the summer of 1817 President Monroe visited Detroit, and Governor Cass complimented him by creating the new county of Monroe and naming it in his honor. Soon thereafter the seat of justice was established by executive proclamation in the village which is still called Monroe. Thus after a third of a century of continued existence the settlement acquired its permanent name.

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enemy and ascertain the strength of the army which was advancing to Detroit. It returned the third day, after scouting Hull's entire army, and reported to Colonel Procter that the "Long-knives," as they called the Americans, or in their own language *Kitchimokoman*, were as numerous as the mosquitoes in the woods, and that they were cutting down the trees as they advanced to open a passage for their wagons.

It was practically impossible for us to oppose the advance of the enemy at this time, because of the weakness of our garrison, which consisted of only a few companies of regular troops and a single company of militia, recently organized and commanded by Captain Elliott, while the Indians were also few in number. The arrival of Tecumseh and his tribe was momentarily expected, however, as well as the Potawatomi, the Sacs, and the Winnebagoes; but these did not arrive until after Hull had marched into Detroit.

As soon as he reached this place he set about constructing floating batteries to effect the bombardment and burning of Amherstburg and the conquest of the garrison of that place. But through some combination of misfortunes I am unable to relate, this project ran aground. He then erected batteries opposite Sandwich and bombarded that town.

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One of the cannon balls struck the house of Colonel Jacques Baby without, however, injuring anyone. The next day Baby mustered as many of the militia as he could rally and marched to Amherstburg.

Hull now crossed the river above Sandwich with ten companies of soldiers and pitched camp on the farm of Mr. Jean Baptiste Baby, establishing his headquarters in the beautiful mansion which that gentleman had just built, and causing much damage to this fine estate. A small entrenchment was thrown up to protect the soldiers from any surprise by the Indians during the night.

Upon his arrival at Amherstburg, Colonel Baby came to stay with me, a circumstance which gave me great pleasure. During the month of July we had several skirmishes with the enemy, the most important one being at the bridge over the Canard River, between Sandwich and Amherstburg and about three miles from the latter village. Here we had a picket composed of a company of infantry and some artillery men in charge of the fieldpieces stationed there, besides some savages for patrol duty. The Americans attacked this picket but were forced to retire in great haste.

One day in July a band of Indians composed of Shawnees with Tecumseh at their

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head, besides some Ottawas and Potawatomi came to my store—I have always enjoyed the confidence of these children of the forest—and asked me if I would go with them to Petite Côte, three miles beyond our picket at River Canard, to deliver a blow at the enemy. I could not refuse, since in that case I would have sunk very low in their estimation, so I answered that I would gladly go with them. Accordingly, I made my preparations, not exactly those for a ball, but rather to try to exchange some English for American balls. I dressed lightly, the better to make my escape if necessary, for the moment the Indians believe themselves vanquished they take to their heels and run like rabbits; then with my musket, powder and balls, I joined the others and we all marched off. There were about a hundred and fifty warriors, with myself the only white man among them. On reaching Petite Côte we arranged ourselves according to the Indian fashion on either side of the road, hidden among high stalks of corn so as not to be seen, and waited thus in ambush for the American cavalry, which, the Indians said, usually came in the afternoon to drill just beyond reach of our fieldpieces which, as I have mentioned, guarded the bridge. About three o'clock several fine squadrons ap-

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proached. They were soon opposite the field where we were hidden, when suddenly from both sides came a furious discharge of musketry accompanied with arrow flights, which felled a large number of these men on their handsome mounts. Those who were not slain on the field begged for mercy but the Indians are absolutely deaf to all such entreaties, demanding nothing less than the death of their enemy. What a carnage followed! Those with the slightest chance to escape tried to do so, some successfully, others less fortunate. One poor horseman who had received only a slight wound which, however, prevented him from keeping his saddle, threw himself from a bridge into the river, hoping thus to elude his terrible adversaries. It was in vain; swift as winged steeds the warriors pursued, avid for blood. As the wounded horseman jumped into the water a young Shawnee brave leaped upon him and killed him with a single blow of his tomahawk. After a couple of hours the warriors returned from hunting the fugitives, having slain several of them. For the first time in my life I had taken part in a frightful carnage. I was filled with a horror of the war. Yet I must admit that the heart soon becomes hardened when these bloody scenes are repeated; this I

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learned when I engaged in similar excursions later on.

I have almost forgotten to mention that in the previous month we had received an unexpected reinforcement. Messrs. Lacroix and Berthelet, who traded in the South, arrived here on their way to Post St. Joseph.²⁹ The military authorities judged best to detain both them and their vessels for there was good reason to fear that in passing Detroit the enemy would make them prisoners and take possession of all they had. Consequently, their goods were unloaded and stored in the King's warehouse under efficient guard. A few days later, these same boats were converted into gunboats, each under the command of an officer of marines, thereby adding much to our strength.

But to return to hostilities. On Tuesday evening, August 7th, a vigorous alarm was sounded, the drummer who patrolled the streets beating the call to arms. I was at dinner with the gentlemen who were staying with me, and I hurried out to ask the drummer what he meant by his racket. His name was Molesworth, of the Forty-first Regiment. He replied that Major Muir was about to cross

²⁹ The British post on St. Joseph Island in the Ste. Mary's River. Joseph and Estelle Bayliss, *Historic St. Joseph Island*, supplies an admirable history of this fort.

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the river to Brownstown with several companies of soldiers and a large number of Indians to intercept the Americans coming from River Raisin to Detroit with provisions for their army; he needed all the loyal subjects of the King who would join him, and all were welcome. I deliberated a little and resolved to join the expedition. Hurrying back to the dining-room I informed my clerks of my decision, as also Messrs. Lacroix and Berthelet. Unknown to anyone I then went out to bury at the corner of my house two full gallons of coins, doubloons, guineas, and piasters. This I did without the knowledge of a single soul, indiscreet as it was should I receive a mortal wound. Without further hesitation, and forgetful of all else but the expedition, I set out for the Shipyard, the place fixed for its departure, and placed myself under the command of Major Muir as a volunteer. I met Tecumseh there, at the head of the Indian bands. Truly it was a beautiful spectacle to see so many boats and nearly three hundred canoes assembled together. The aborigines rent the air with their war whoops. Other volunteers joining Major Muir were Alexis Maisonneville, Jean Baptiste Barthe, James Eberts, the two Cadotte brothers, and Alexis Bouthilier, a native of Longueuil; also Mr. Jean Baptiste

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Baby, accompanied by Richardson³⁰ of Amherstburg of the regular army. The officers of the Forty-first Regiment whom I knew were Major Muir, Captain Tallan, Lieutenants Clemow, Bender, and Sutherland, and Dr. Faulkner. Undoubtedly there were others, but I do not remember any more.

Setting out about three o'clock in the afternoon, it was a little after four when we disembarked on the other side of the river at the place best suited for our operations. The first thing done was to construct a long cabin of branches to shelter us from bad weather. All the next day we lay expecting the enemy but they gave no sign of life for they had been warned by spies that a strong party of British and Indians were in waiting at Brownstown. I cannot conceive how these despicable beings had managed to come near

³⁰ Although the allusion may be to Dr. Robert Richardson, surgeon of the garrison at Amherstburg and local magistrate, it is more probably his son John, who took part in the Monguagon and Brownstown operations. He became in later years a well-known Canadian author, and his history of the war on the Northwestern front is his best-known work. He wrote several works of fiction, and his *Hardscrabble*, or *the Fall of Chicago*, and *Waunagee*, or *the Massacre of Chicago*, published in 1850 and 1852 are among the earliest literary productions having Chicago as their locus.

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enough to be able to report that we were there to dispute the way, seeing that we had immediately stationed Indians in the woods as a patrol.

We had strict orders not to light any fire during the night lest we attract the attention of the Americans. It was very damp, being in the neighborhood of the lake and surrounded by marshes, and we suffered from the cold, the more so as we had not yet received any blankets nor even provisions. The empty stomachs of the soldiers were crying aloud with hunger.

That night I was hunting for a comfortable place to lie down alone, for I could no longer endure the cabin crowded with the main body of our soldiers, when I passed close to a man hidden in the bushes and sleeping soundly under the protection of a blanket. Envy possessed me and I promptly yielded to it so far as to think this person altogether too fortunate. Softly, so as not to disturb his slumber, I managed to deprive him of the coveted object and withdrawing to a discreet distance from him I passed the remainder of the night in sound repose. At daybreak I left my retreat and entered the encampment where I immediately encountered Mr. Jean Baptiste Baby storming about in a very bad humor. Seeing

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me, he burst out, "Dog's devil!" (an oath in common use among Canadians at that time) "Someone stole my blanket last night! My face was covered with dew when I awoke and my clothes were all wet! Some devil of an Indian, I suppose, treated me in this fashion. They never have any manners!" I was so embarrassed that I could not look the good man in the face for shame over what I had done, and at the moment I was much too ashamed to confess my fault. Some days after, however, I returned the blanket by the hand of one of my Indian friends with my humble apologies. That same day Major Muir procured the provisions we needed and I received from home my personal toilet articles.

We had been preceded on the evening of our arrival at Brownstown by a band of Shawnees and Ottawas who had been sent by Superintendent Elliott to reconnoiter the American position at River Raisin. They told us that they had seen wagons loaded with provisions for Hull's army at Detroit, which was in need of stores of all kinds. Pressed by hunger, Hull that same day sent a body of cavalry to meet the reinforcement that was coming to him and of which he stood in such need, but it had been attacked by our Indians that afternoon between

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Brownstown and Monguagon.³¹ According to their custom they formed an ambush on each side of the road which Hull had opened for the passage of his army through the dense forest and the American troops fell into the trap. Arrows and musket balls rained upon them from every side, sowing death and creating a panic in the ranks easy to understand. All who had not already bitten the dust fled galloping away to escape being taken by their ferocious enemy. A young Shawnee named Blue Jacket, who was very agile and courageous, rushed upon one of the American cavalymen, and leaping up behind him, with his right hand killed the American with his tomahawk in the very instant the latter was about to run him through with his sword. Another American who had witnessed this struggle between his friend and the young

³¹ The battle of Brownstown, here described was fought on August 5. On the American side were about 200 Ohio mounted militia, led by Major Van Horne, and on the British an unknown number of Tecumseh's Indians (according to Major Richardson, only 25). The Americans rode into Tecumseh's ambushade and promptly fled, with a loss of 17 dead, half of them being officers. The mortality list lends countenance to the charge subsequently made by General Hull that the militia ran away, leaving their officers to be massacred. See M. M. Quaife, "The Story of Brownstown" in *Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflet*, IV, 65-80.

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warrior turned back and attacked poor Blue Jacket, who, exhausted by his exertions, was overcome and slain. The carnage which the Indians perpetrated in this encounter was horrible. They scalped everyone they could overtake and placed these trophies of their bravery on long poles which they stuck up in the ground by the roadside. They also drove long stakes through the bodies of the slain which were left lying thus exposed. It was a hideous sight to see and little calculated to encourage the enemy when passing by it on the way to Detroit.

As soon as we reached Brownstown we saw that this band of savages had met the enemy. There, on the bare ground, lay stretched a poor young Virginian, the body covered with blood from two deep gashes with a knife. Needless to say, it, too, was scalped. A moment later another young man radiant with life was brought to us, who had been captured by the Potawatomi. The chief of the tribe, a perfect savage and avid for human blood, at once summoned several old squaws who were in the habit of following the warriors to take care of their camps, and ordered them to kill his captive in our presence. Major Muir was at hand with several companies of the Forty-first Regiment and they interposed, seeking by every possible

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means to redeem the unfortunate prisoner who awaited such a terrible fate. After a lengthy parley with this demon thirsting for human blood he finally consented not to slay the poor fellow on our promise that when we returned to English territory he would be given a barrel of rum and outfits of clothing for all his family.

While we were thus treating for the redemption of the prisoner, and even as the affair was being concluded in the interests of humanity, piercing shrieks resounded from the depths of the forest. It was the death cry of some of the savages who had defeated the American cavalry in the afternoon. A funeral convoy then appeared before our eyes. Four members of the tribe of Blue Jacket carried his body on their shoulders and the procession was now in our midst. I knew at once that all was over for our young American, and that nothing in the world could save him from a cruel death. They deposited the body of Blue Jacket at the feet of the prisoner. The blow of the cavalryman had almost severed the head, and as though for the first time the young man comprehended the sad fate that awaited him. He became pale as death, and looking round at us all in turn, in a low voice and with an expression torn by anxiety, asked

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if it were possible the English allowed such acts of barbarity. The shrieks of the savages drowned whatever response was made, though it seemed to be one of sympathy.

The chief had already raised the hatchet over his head, entirely oblivious of the arrangement for ransom consummated between Major Muir and himself, and with ferocious and bloodshot eyes regarded his prey. The old squaws drew near and at a signal from this tiger, for he was one really, one of them plunged her butcher knife into the neck of her victim, while another stabbed him in the side. The young soldier staggered and was about to fall when the chief laid him at his feet with a powerful blow of the tomahawk.³²

Spectators of this disgusting scene, we all stood around overcome by an acute sense of shame! We felt implicated in some way in this murder, for murder it was and of the most atrocious kind! And yet under the circumstances what could we do? The life

³² Major Richardson, like Verchères an eye-witness of this scene, has described it somewhat differently in his *War of 1812*, first published in 1842. See Casselman, *Richardson's War of 1812* (Toronto, 1902), 27-30. He describes the slaughter of two prisoners (the first instance evidently not the one related by Verchères) and identifies the slain chief as Logan, rather than Blue Jacket.

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of that man undoubtedly belonged to the inhuman chief. The government had desperate need of these Indian allies. Our garrison was weak and these warriors were numerous enough to impose their will upon us. If we were to rebuke them in this crisis and compel them to observe our manner of warfare, in place of leaving them to their own barbarous practices, they would withdraw from the conflict and retire to their own country on the Missouri whence they had come to join us.

A whole week elapsed while we lay in waiting for our adversaries.³³ We had been daily in hopes that as the need of provisions grew more pressing, since the green apples to which they were reduced afforded but little nourishment, Hull would send out a considerable force to bring in the more health-giving supplies from the River Raisin. But no! He would not measure his strength

³³ Here, as elsewhere, the author's memory is inaccurate in the matter of dates. The battle of Brownstown was fought on August 5; the battle of Monguagon, on August 9. Both Richardson and Verchères agree that Brownstown had been fought before Major Muir crossed the river to oppose the advance of the second American detachment. Richardson states that the crossing was made on August 6. The interval of waiting, until the battle of Monguagon, therefore, could not have exceeded three days.

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with ours, preferring to suffer the pangs of hunger.

We had come out solely on the strength of engaging in a surprise attack. Sunday arrived and Major Muir decided to send us back to our respective firesides that afternoon. No one opposed this decision of the commander. For my part I was very glad, for I had left home in hope of something entirely different than a tiresome wait for the enemy to show himself.

We were already under arms and in the act of embarking, under the command of Lieutenant Bender, when the loud war cries of our savage scouts attracted our attention. They soon came up and reported to Major Muir that the Americans, for whom we had so long been in waiting, were just above us, like the mosquitoes of the swamp in number, and that they had several pieces of cannon. It was true. Unable to wait longer, unless he wished to see his army perish from hunger and his garrison weakened, Hull was obliged to send out a force sufficient to engage with the British and open a passage.

Immediately on the receipt of this news our orders were reversed, and we were told to march in all haste for the ravine at Monguagon and there await the enemy. After

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the first volley we were to charge the enemy with the bayonet. This was Tecumseh's plan, and as it was especially adapted to that locality it was accepted by Major Muir. This intrepid Indian was to hide in an adjacent cornfield and give us the aid of all his following when the right moment arrived.

We put sprigs of the basswood tree in our caps so as to be recognized by our allies in the encounter and struck out with redoubled speed on the road which had already been so disastrously disputed and on which Blue Jacket had received his death wound. What a frightful scene was this! Even yet I am seized with terror, and shudder as I recall it. There were displayed all the corpses of the cavalymen, already decomposed and transfixed with stakes by the savages, and gnawed and mangled by crows and other carnivorous creatures of the forest. The stench from these rotting bodies is impossible to describe. And the same fate might soon be ours, marching to war with consequences no one could predict?

Before we left Brownstown Major Muir had sent a canoe to notify Colonel Procter of the approaching engagement and to ask him to send over a company of soldiers without delay for our relief in case of need.

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Arrived at Monguagon and stationed in the ravine awaiting the enemy, our men had a brief rest. I found that I had on my left my good friend, Mr. Jean Baptiste Baby, and I asked him for a pinch of snuff to keep me in countenance a little. An instant later and we could easily hear the American drummer who seemed to beat with less assurance as he approached the ravine where we lay flat on our bellies, as though he feared something of the kind. The enemy formed a square to receive us on all four sides. Still hidden, we awaited the signal to charge. Scarcely a moment elapsed when a brilliant officer mounted on a superb steed appeared on an eminence. His hat was crowned with plumes fully three feet in length. But his inspection was of brief duration for on the instant a bullet struck him and he fell dead at his horse's feet. Firing now began on our left, the Indians in the cornfield being nearest to the approaching enemy. They quickly advanced upon us, and the engagement became general. For fifty minutes the firing was terrible. Fortunately the balls and grapeshot of our adversaries lodged in the treetops, in place of striking our ranks. At the appointed moment, with the two ranks face to face, Major Muir ordered the bugler at his side to sound the bayonet charge. Just

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then the company of grenadiers of the 41st commanded by Captain Bullard, which General Procter had sent to reinforce us, came up. We were not at all sorry to see them for things were getting decidedly hot for us. At this moment an officer of the regiment stationed on my left, shouted to me, "Take care de Boucherville! The Kentuckians are aiming at you!" But he himself received the bullet in his head and fell over into my arms. "Well, old fellow!" I said to myself, "You came out of that all right!" I was not yet safe, however, for an instant later I was wounded in my turn.

The grenadiers, who had been sent by the General to reinforce us, were stationed in the center. The signal which Major Muir was to give for the charge had not been explained to them, and thinking it was an order to retreat, they turned to the rear without firing a single shot. The fusillade on both sides was very heavy. There was not the slightest breeze and the smoke became so dense we could not see twenty paces before us. Finally, we were obliged to draw back because of the unexpected and groundless retreat of the grenadiers and that, too, at the very moment of victory, for the enemy's center had broken. Only the two wings of their army were composed of regular soldiers, and

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these were wavering because of the great number of killed and wounded. Thus the grenadier company, in place of helping us, succeeded only in throwing our ranks into disorder and was the sole cause of our defeat. This is painful to say, yet it is the simple truth.

Our troops defiled at a quick step and as they retreated fired their guns behind them, thus exposing the wounded in the rear of the army to death. Among those exposed to this irregular fire were a Mr. Berthe, another soldier, and myself. There had been many others but they were on ahead. We dove into the woods to escape the shower of bullets which poured upon us from both sides, for the enemy were in close pursuit of our men. Out of sight at last, we hid under the trunk of a big tree which had fallen into the water of the surrounding cedar swamp.

Our soldiers returned to Brownstown and rushed into the boats for Amherstburg which were under the command of Lieutenant Bender. Tecumseh and his Indians crossed the river in their canoes. It is well to mention here that our forces in the moment of action did not exceed two hundred regulars, about fifteen Canadian volunteers, and two hundred Indians, while those of our ad-

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versary, commanded by Colonel Miller, were two thousand five hundred strong, according to their own report of the engagement.³⁴

The Americans spent the night on the field of battle, carrying off and burying their dead, that the number of casualties might not be known. I can speak truthfully of this for I passed the night with my companions only a few hundred feet from them. The Kentuckians, who seemed to be stationed as sentinels, were often almost upon us but fortunately we were not discovered. At last, in spite of the inky darkness, we ventured to

³⁴ The American force at Monguagon consisted of the Fourth U. S. Infantry, a company of Detroit militia, 240 Ohio militia, and a few artillerymen, in all about 600 men, commanded by Colonel James Miller. Upon the issue of the battle the fate of Detroit depended, and Hull had placed more than one-fourth of his entire army under Colonel Miller's command. Both the American force and the American losses probably exceeded the British, although we have no definite knowledge of the number of Tecumseh's Indians. Participants in a battle commonly exaggerate both the numbers and the losses of their opponent. Hull reported the American loss as 18 killed and 57 wounded. Colonel Procter reported 4 white soldiers killed and 15 wounded, and 2 Indians killed and 6 wounded. It seems improbable that he knew accurately the extent of the Indian casualties. It is clear, however, that the Americans suffered more heavily than did their opponents.

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leave this amphibian retreat, seeking, if possible, a more comfortable shelter. About ten in the evening the rain began to fall in torrents and we were soaked to the bone. The thunder growled incessantly over our heads but luckily the lightning served to guide us. We suffered cruelly from hunger and seemed to be getting weaker. At last we came upon a slight elevation in the cedar swamp, which, although almost surrounded by water, was relatively dry and at least out of sight of the enemy.

I treated my wound as well as I could, for it was bleeding some though quite painless, by applying a little earth after the manner of the Indians, then tied it up with a towel which I had taken the precaution to bring with me in case of accident. We passed the remainder of the night here in this sad plight, for the rain lasted until dawn, and it was followed by a gale so violent that the limbs of the trees fell all around us. We were in quite as much danger, if not more, than in the battle of the preceding afternoon, but a divine providence came to our aid and saved us alike from strife and storm, both equally murderous. All that awful night we were beset with mosquitoes, who made war upon us in their own fashion. The soldier with us, tired and hungry, had

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slept with his mouth open and wakened only when it was too full of these hateful insects for further sleep, to spit them all out.

At daybreak I told Mr. Berthe that we must leave our hiding place and try to reach the river, which could not be far away. After a prayer to God to lead us safely into harbor I struck out with my two companions. All three of us had muskets. About four in the afternoon we reached the bank of the Detroit River and decided to make our way to Brownstown, being careful not to fall into the hands of the enemy, who might easily have taken up their quarters in that place. Not a soul was in sight, but we were not yet out of our difficulties. To get to Amherstburg we must have a boat, and where could we find one here? Without boat or canoe, what could we do? Suddenly it occurred to me to search the ruins where we had taken refuge, the former habitation of an old Huron chief who had gone to Canada at the breaking out of hostilities, for some boards and strands of basswood which the Hurons usually kept on hand in these wigwams. Providence had indeed come to our aid for there was an abundance of both, as well as some dry planks.

We built a raft, then without waiting to consider the risk of our undertaking, we de-

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cided to cross the river as far as a certain island about two and a half miles distant.³⁵ We reached it, though not without considerable danger. More and more we were yielding to fatigue, but we hastily crossed the island under cover of its deep verdure so as to get in sight of Amherstburg and if possible signal for help. On the shore lay a quantity of bark, left there in the spring by the Indians, and the soldier, overcome by fatigue and hunger, threw himself down on a pile to rest. Immediately several rattlesnakes crawled out from beneath it, scaring him so that he jumped into the water and would not come out but stood there waiting for someone to come to his rescue. Mr. Berthe and I wiped out our muskets and fired several shots to attract attention. We also made flags of our shirts on the ends of long poles and used these for a signal. Soon a boat manned by some Hurons came out in our direction but hesitated, as though fearing a ruse on the part of the Americans. In mid-stream it stopped as though uncertain what

³⁵ There are several small islands in the mouth of Detroit River, grouped around the lower end of Grosse Ile. Probably the one here noted was either Hickory or Sugar Island. The name Isle St. Lawrence, which the author gives farther on in his narrative, has never been encountered elsewhere by the present Editor.

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to do. We were anything but encouraged. A moment afterward a medium-sized canoe filled with Sauteau started out directly toward us. Never have I seen one man so glad to see another as the Indian in command of the boat was to see me. He said nothing to my companions, scarcely recognizing them, in fact, in accord with Indian etiquette.

Without loss of time we took our places in this light craft. There were seven of us and I really experienced more fear in that crossing than in that from the American side to Isle St. Laurence, which we had just left. Arrived at Amherstburg, from all sides came my friends, officers, civilians, and natives, to congratulate me on my safe return. They all thought they would never see me again, since some Indians had reported that they had seen me in the battle covered with blood and with a dead soldier at my side. In fact there had been one, the young officer who had so coolly called out "De Boucherville, take care. The Kentuckians are aiming at you!" After I had thanked all who had come down to the shore to greet me, we separated to go to our respective homes.

Entering mine, the first thing I did was to throw myself on a sofa to rest. At once I fell into a sleep as deep as though I had taken a strong dose of opium. In the mean-

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time many visitors called to inquire after my health, among others Tecumseh and the officers of the 41st, who remained for my wakening to enter into conversation with me. It was five in the afternoon before I roused from my long sleep to find myself in a goodly company. How comforting were my sensations at this moment! In the first place I had joined the army of His Majesty my King as a volunteer from a sense of duty. I had played the part of a good soldier and had shed my blood as the loyal Canadian I was. In fact I can but admit that deep in my inmost soul there was a feeling of pride.

My wound was troubling me somewhat at this time. The earth I had applied naturally caused an inflammation. Next day the surgeon extracted the ball but he could not do the same for the shot scattered in my left thigh, which still bothers me, especially in damp weather. The good Tecumseh brought me an Indian doctor who was a recognized healer among the Shawnee and who used nothing but herbs. This man assured me that the wound would soon heal if I bathed it with what he would give me and nothing else, and that he would guarantee that in a few days I would again be fit to serve my King and Country. I consulted with Dr. Faulkner of the regiment and with

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Dr. Richardson,³⁶ my regular physician, and both agreed that there was no harm in the treatment. My Indian doctor therefore returned the next day and started in with his herbs. Ten days later the wound was healed and I was able to resume my duties. I first paid my respects to Colonel Procter, who received me with marked courtesy. Then I visited Messrs. Baby, Reynolds, Maisonneville, and others, not forgetting my friend Rolette, whom I loved as a brother.

All was tranquil for several days, but on August 24 General Brock arrived in a vessel from Long Point,³⁷ with several companies of

³⁶ Dr. Robert Richardson was the father of Major John Richardson, Canadian soldier and author, whose *War of 1812* has been previously noted. Dr. Richardson was a native of Scotland who came to Upper Canada in 1792 as assistant surgeon of the Queen's Rangers. The Rangers were disbanded in 1802 and as many of the regiment as desired it were returned to England. Dr. Richardson remained in Canada, making his home at Amherstburg, where he served both as garrison surgeon and as local magistrate. He married twice and left many descendants. His first wife, Madelaine Askin of Detroit, had an Indian mother, and Major Richardson, the author, was therefore of one-fourth Indian descent. Dr. Richardson died at Amherstburg in 1832.

³⁷ The author's chronology of Brock's Detroit campaign is confused. General Brock reached Amherstburg from Niagara on Aug. 13. He summoned Hull to surrender (being then at Sandwich) about noon of Aug. 15. The summons being spurned by General Hull, he

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regular soldiers and organized militia. He immediately issued a proclamation to hold ourselves in readiness to go to take Detroit.

Before continuing my narrative of this expedition I must not forget to report our losses at the battle of Monguagon.

We had one officer killed, the one stationed close to me whom I have already mentioned. Major Muir and Lieutenant Clemow were wounded, and among the Canadian volunteers who suffered wounds were Joseph Berthe, Jean Baptiste Cadotte, Alexis Bouthilier, de Longueuil, a soldier, and myself. Several Indians were also wounded. There may have been some of the regular soldiers killed but if so the fact did not come to my knowledge. The Americans on the other hand lost a large number.

But to return to the attack of General Brock on Detroit. Quite late in the afternoon he left Amherstburg with his regular troops and militia. Captains Elliott and Caldwell had each a company under his

crossed the river about dawn of Aug. 16th, several hundred Indians having preceded him in crossing during the night. The surrender and occupation of Detroit took place technically at noon, but actually a little later, on Aug. 16. These statements will serve to correct the author's chronology throughout his narrative of the event.

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order. Major Muir, Captain Tallan and other officers of the Forty-first Regiment of infantry brought with them three-fourths of the garrison. Then came the militia, which made up four companies. I had enrolled at the head of one of these as captain, the grade I held in Lower Canada.

We soon reached the outskirts of Sandwich, directly opposite Springwells on the American side, and here we bivouacked, waiting for the artillery, which came up but did not halt. It was commanded by Major Cadiz, Lieutenant Troughton, Captain Dixon, and several other officers, and continued on its way to the upper part of Sandwich, opposite Detroit, where it threw up intrenchments to pass the night there.

We on our part were inspected by the General before crossing to the opposite shore. While this was going on, the savages arrived in their bark canoes to the number of three hundred. According to custom they had spent the preceding night at Amherstburg dancing the war dance. It was an extraordinary spectacle to see all these aborigines assembled together at one time, some covered with vermillion, others with blue clay, and still others tattooed in black and white from head to foot. Their single article of clothing was a breechcloth, always worn

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when going to war. An European witnessing this strange spectacle for the first time would have thought, I truly believe, that he was standing at the entrance to hell, with the gates thrown open to let the damned out for an hour's recreation on earth! It was frightful, horrifying beyond expression. Accustomed as I was to seeing them on such occasions I could not but feel overcome, as though under the influence of some kind of terror which I was powerless to control.

Between seven and eight in the evening the crossing was effected at Springwells, General Brock leading, then Tecumseh with his tribes, Shawnee, Potawatomi, Ottawa, Sauteau, Sacs, and Winnebagoes following him. From the shore it must have been an impressive sight to see all those boats drawing off in perfect order and landing together on the other side. The debarkment was made without any confusion and there we remained till dark, the Indians surrounding the American garrison from the wooded side, the orders being to scale the fort at midnight with the ladders we had brought for the purpose.

Soon the bombs of the British began to burst. The balls were fired by our artillery stationed opposite Detroit and they fell like hail upon the town. The bombardment be-

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came ever fiercer; not for a single instant did the explosion of shells above and within the fort cease. The terrific din was increased by the howls of the savages, impatient to take part in the combat. It was the first time I had ever witnessed the firing and effect of a bomb and I was deeply impressed.

All this terrible noise had so frightened General Hull that he dared make no reply to our bombardment, although he had everything at hand for his defense. More than three thousand men were under his orders, and cannon of every caliber, including some 24 pounders, were mounted advantageously against us. To tell the truth he lacked the capacity for vigorous action.

General Brock remained at our head, ready to advance when the moment came for an assault on the fort at the point of the bayonet, in conjunction with the savages. Thus we passed the whole night under arms. What was our surprise to see at dawn a white flag floating over the fort, and soon General Brock opened negotiations with the American commander. Their garrison surrendered to the little British army, which entered by the gate on the forest side of the fort while the Americans marched out through the river gate. Cries of "Long live the King," were heard on all sides, even from the Sand-

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wich shore across the river. The band played Rule Britannia and the British flag was raised. It was nearly seven in the morning when we took possession of Detroit.

The American militia from Virginia and Kentucky embarked on small vessels bound for Cleveland and thence to their respective homes on parole. The action terminated, the Indians rode through the streets of the town in the fine carriages of the American officers. Soon every savage among them was dead drunk, either stretched out in the carriages or lying full length in the dust of the streets. Their joy would not have been complete if they had not presented this disgusting spectacle.

We found four officers dead in the mess-room, their brains scattered over the walls. They had been killed by the bursting of a bomb during the bombardment. A number of soldiers had also been killed by shells and grapeshot. It seemed apparent that if the attack had been deferred until the next day, our soup would have been much hotter, for the garrison was on the eve of being reinforced by a body of regular troops commanded by Colonel McArthur, who was even then at the gates. But on learning that the flag had just been lowered he hastily retreated, swearing that if he had been present

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at the moment of capitulation he himself would have put a bullet through General Hull, who was a coward and more fit to be a cowherd than the commander of an army. He considered the surrender disgraceful, the place being so well supplied with men, ammunition, and especially with cannon. He regretted most the brass cannon which had been captured from Burgoyne, a general who resembled Hull in more ways than one, and who had made such a costly sacrifice for the British.³⁸

³⁸ After the failure of two attempts (battles of Brownstown and Monguagon) to reopen his line of communications with Ohio, Hull had sent Colonels Cass and McArthur with a force of several hundred men to proceed by an inland route (the present-day U. S. 112) from Detroit to Monroe via Ypsilanti, in the effort to contact and bring on the needed supplies for his army. While they were absent, General Brock demanded and obtained the surrender of Detroit. Although Cass and McArthur were loud in their denunciations of the surrender, there is but slight ground for supposing that had they been present the outcome would have been any different. The simple truth is that the American army was deplorably lacking in both the capacity for leadership and the elements of discipline.

The Burgoyne cannon have had a long and interesting history. Captured at Bennington by General Stark on Aug. 16, 1777, after a thirty-five year career in the American army, they were now restored to British possession. They were again recaptured by the Amer-

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That evening we were sent back to Amherstburg with the exception of the regulars, who remained in garrison for some time. General Brock returned to Niagara taking with him the incorporated militia. After the capture of Detroit matters remained tranquil for quite a long time. The regular troops of the enemy who had been made prisoners of war were hurried off to Quebec the following week.

Major Muir wrote me on behalf of Colonel Procter asking if I would assume command of a company to conduct the American militia to Cleveland. I replied that much as I felt flattered by this mark of confidence from the commander I greatly preferred to be left for some days to the management of my business, which had been much damaged by my repeated absences since the beginning of the campaign; that he could not doubt my willingness and my desire to serve my King when it was a question of meeting the enemy, but that this was an entirely

icans the following year, when General Vincent surrendered Fort George on the Niagara, May 27, 1813. One of them is still preserved at the state capitol of Vermont, and another in the historical museum at Bennington.

For their story, see J. P. Earle, "The Bennington Cannon," in *New York History*, XXXV (July, 1937), 312-17.

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different matter, which could be executed quite as well by persons who had remained at home in Amherstburg as by me and many others who had assisted in the reduction of Detroit. Colonel Procter was quite in agreement with my reasoning, and to my great relief he immediately appointed another officer.

The autumn passed tranquilly enough but provisions were very dear and merchandise scarce. The commander shipped some of the cannon taken at Detroit to Amherstburg, but all the brass pieces which had been taken from General Burgoyne were sent to Quebec. During this period of suspended hostilities the construction of several war vessels was begun. These, added to what we had taken from the enemy, should assure us the mastery of Lake Erie and of the posts above, Mackinac and the rest. On the other hand, the Americans were also building vessels at Presqu'île on the shore of Lake Erie, with the intention of preventing us from acquiring any superiority on this lake.

In December orders came for us to have the hoods of our great coats edged with black, at least all those who could afford it and who would have occasion to accompany the Indians on an expedition. At the end of this same month I learned with profound grief of the death of my venerable father,

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which had occurred in the preceding month of September; my brother sent this information to me.

By this time my goods were entirely exhausted and I had absolutely nothing to do. Trade was totally suspended, for one could scarcely find a skein of thread for mending, whether at Amherstburg, Sandwich, or Detroit. I therefore conceived the idea of paying a visit to my dear mother to console her for the cruel loss she had suffered. Major Muir, to whom I disclosed my project, far from opposing me, strongly advised me to undertake the journey. So I begged my friend Woolsey to look after my house during my absence, which surely would not be long, and started.

On January 5, 1813, I set out through the deep snow with a man named Francis Alain, whom I had engaged to take me by cariole as far as Boucherville. My baggage did not amount to much, consisting of a single suitcase. I had also in a small box a complete outfit for an Indian warrior, cloak, leggings, *potomagane*, and other things. The head of the *potomagane* (a kind of tomahawk) represented a serpent with a bone in its mouth. On the fifth day after my departure I reached the house of my good friend, Mr. St. George, in York, and here I would gladly

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have remained for some days, but duty forbade and I started the next day for Kingston. On the way we were constantly delayed to let convoys of forty or fifty wagons loaded with provisions, ammunition, cannon, etc., pass, which were being hurried on to Upper Canada. These various meetings caused us infinite delay, especially between York and Kingston.

Arrived at Montreal, after resting only a couple of hours, I set out for Boucherville. How surprised my dear mother was to see me! Such a visit was beyond her fondest anticipations! She had heard from my brother that I had been wounded, and she could not believe that I was well enough to undertake such a long, wearisome journey.

I remained almost a month with the family, the days following each other in happy intercourse. My mother wanted me to see Quebec, a kind of terra incognita for me. She urged it so pressingly that at last I decided to go, the desire to meet two of my brothers weighing heavily with me; one was curé at Charlebourg, the other provincial aide-de-camp of General Provost, Governor of Canada.

I made the trip by carriage in five days, accompanied by a young man whom I had engaged for this purpose. On the evening

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of the fifth day I reached Ste. Foy and then Quebec. I had some difficulty in finding where my brother lived for I had stupidly forgotten to ask my mother for his address. The next day I visited families to whom we were related and from whom I received repeated courtesies, but I was most pleased to meet my two brothers, whom I had not seen for many years. If the kindness and hospitality of Quebec people were ever in question I could never be silent. I passed the winter resting from the fatigues I had endured during the preceding summer, which had materially affected my health. My pleasant situation soon made me forget the evil days I had undergone. But soon the clouds returned to darken the sky.

At the beginning of spring I received a letter from Mr. St. George, who was then in Montreal, advising me strongly to return to my store. The reasons he gave were so convincing that I immediately decided to leave Quebec the next day by stage for Montreal. Not finding him there I went on at once to Boucherville and was unable to return to Montreal for several weeks owing to the impassable condition of the roads in spring. At length, however, I made the journey and joined him at his hotel, kept by a man named Clamp, on the old market. I spent

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several days with him and purchased an assortment of merchandise the most suitable for my trade, completing it at the house of Messrs. Gillespie & Co., the whole amounting to about thirteen thousand dollars.

I well knew the risk I was running in shipping such a quantity of merchandise up to Amherstburg, for the Americans now had a strong naval force on Lake Erie. But there was no drawing back. I returned to Boucherville to engage my men and to procure four large bark canoes at Repentigny. They were veritable rabascas, and cost one hundred dollars apiece.

In spite of my anxiety to get away, various matters occurred to delay me. My chief fear was that my goods would be seized by the Americans, for they had just taken several boatloads of merchandise at the Thousand Islands. Major de Bercy, of the Watteville Regiment was leaving with some of his men for Kingston and I resolved to join his brigade with my canoes. Accordingly, we left Lachine in the afternoon of June 5th. The way was clear as far as Kingston and we got on well enough except for one little scare at the Thousand Islands, which, however, did not amount to anything.

At Kingston I hurried away to find my brother, the aide-de-camp, who was in serv-

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ice with Sir George. I asked him to inquire of His Excellency if he would like to send any munitions by me to Amherstburg. He was very glad of the offer and had four barrels of powder loaded in my canoes and the next day we set out.

From Kingston I crossed the Bay of Quinte for the Trent River Portage, and thence to the shore of Lake Ontario. Each canoe had four oarsmen in the center besides the man at the rudder and the end man or guide. The latter was called Parisien and he was from Perrot Island. I paid him one hundred dollars for the trip and the others fifty dollars each. There were thirty-three men in all, those from Boucherville being Pierre Lamoureux, Desjardins, Rocque, and Charbonneau. All the others were from Perrot Island and Lachine.

And now the danger from the enemy was real enough. No need to fancy anything. After a steady pull all day we camped in a deep bay so as to be out of sight of the formidable gunboats which ordinarily patrolled the lakes during the night, the better to capture British vessels. My men were very tired, for it had been a hard day, and were glad of the prospect of a good night's rest even though it were out in the open, in the woods and on the lake shore. As a measure

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of precaution I had them stack all the bales in front of the camp. I had a presentiment that we would have plenty of excitement during the night. My tent was pitched at the edge of the wood and the canoes, turned upside down, were placed out of sight.

About two o'clock I was wakened with a start from a deep sleep by my young lad, Lapointe, whom I have forgotten to include in the above list of men engaged, who was saying, "Bourgeois! Bourgeois! Wake up! I hear the sound of oars out on the lake!" In fact, a gunboat of the enemy was crossing the bay but they had not yet seen us so far as we could judge, although it was bright moonlight and very calm. I arose in haste and struck my tent and woke the men. We prepared to defend ourselves stoutly in case of attack, taking our stand behind the bales with our guns in our hands. The sound of the oars ceased and I withdrew a little distance from the camp to reconnoiter our position. I was greatly surprised to see, on the other side of a point of land, that the men from the gunboat were most of them lying stretched on the ground while the rest were cooking supper. By the light of the fire I could clearly distinguish the gunboat and the American flag, the arms stacked on either side and a small cannon in front.

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Having seen all that was necessary, I returned to my men and gave directions for launching and loading the canoes as quietly as possible so as not to attract the attention of the enemy. While this was going on I took two men and stationed them a little distance apart so that being in communication with me they could give the signal agreed upon for departure. I myself must watch the movements of the enemy and if necessary go to York by land, as the main highway could not be very far away.

I was soon convinced, however, that there was nothing to fear and returned to the men whom I had placed as sentinels. There I found only one, the other having gone away. Under the impression that he had returned to the camp I hurried thither with the other and asked where was Rocque. All replied that they had not seen him. This worried me greatly for we were all ready to set out. I retraced my steps, searching carefully for my man, when suddenly I saw a figure hiding in the brushwood. Without hesitating I asked who was there, but got no answer. Again I tried, this time in English, but with no better result. Persuaded that he was a spy, I raised my gun and fired. Luckily for him, the weapon did not immediately take fire. "Oh! It's me!" he cried, scared to

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death. "But what the devil are you doing here," I replied, "I took you for a spy. Why did you not answer me?" "Because I thought you were an American," he said, "you looked like a giant." "Come on at once!" I told him, and running and out of breath we reached the canoes all ready to start. Soon we were beyond reach of the American cannon, even supposing that we had been discovered and that they wished to fire. The next day we were at York. A few days before this there had been a serious naval engagement on the lake. We passed several dead bodies floating on the water, not a pleasant sight, believe me!

On my arrival at York I found Mr. St. George returned from Montreal, having made the journey on horseback. He strongly urged me to settle at the head of the lake, saying that business was very promising there, but I was determined to return to Amherstburg where I already had a store, although it was empty at the moment. All the others were empty also, and I felt certain that I would recover my former trade. I therefore continued my journey as I had planned to do at Montreal. At Burlington³⁹

³⁹ Present-day Hamilton, Ontario, which lies on the shore of Burlington Bay at the western end of Lake Ontario.

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I fell in with a picket of soldiers commanded by a sergeant who, at my request, furnished me with a passport. There was a strong, contrary wind when I entered the bay and followed the course in the direction of the portage which must be made at a place called the Grand River.

Three of my canoes were on ahead but the fourth, in which I was traveling and which carried a small flag in the rear, was hailed by a schooner anchored in these waters and signaled to come alongside. We did not stop, however, but continued our way in spite of the violence of the wind and of the waves, which threatened to swamp us any minute. Seeing that we paid no attention to their signal and that we were obstinately pursuing our course, they fired several shots over our heads but the second discharge was better aimed and this time a ball came dangerously near, passing between me and Lamoureux, who were seated on the bales facing the schooner. "Monsieur," he cried, "those devils are determined to send us to the bottom! Look! They are loading the cannon!" In fact, they seemed determined upon doing us a bad turn and in face of such an argument there was nothing to do but submit, whether or no. It was with the greatest difficulty that we were able to approach that

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troublesome vessel. At last when we were near enough I demanded to know what they meant by this and why they had fired upon us, British subjects, adding that I had reported to the picket at the entrance to the bay and was provided with a passport. All they had to say in reply was that they must obey orders. "But what have you to say now that we are here?" "Nothing," replied the captain, "nothing whatever." I was furious and I assured him that General Vincent, who commanded at Burlington Heights, would hear of his conduct as soon as I got there. I was so angry that if he had been on land I really believe I would have rushed at him with one of the paddles. By the time we reached Burlington, however, my ordinary peace of mind was so restored that I thought it better to attend to my own affairs, which were pressing enough, and let the stupid fellow go. It was lucky for him that I did so, for if I had reported him he would have been obliged to face a court-martial and dismissal from the service, so Major Muir told me afterwards.

I engaged twelve heavy wagons, one for each canoe and the remaining eight for the merchandise. Each wagon was drawn by four horses, while we followed on foot. It was a long way and we were tired enough

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when we reached Long Point on Lake Erie, but this was the last of the wearisome portages of the route, and now it was over, thank God.

At dawn the next day we were on the lake with our faces toward Amherstburg but not yet safe from the dangers to which we were exposed on the way. In this fresh-water sea there are many points of land, all fairly accessible; as soon as you double one of these promontories you see another a league or two ahead, with a deep bay between them, and this makes the voyage dangerous whenever the wind rises even a little.

But my fears, for the most part, were not because of such dangers. There might easily be an unexpected and unwelcome encounter with a hostile gunboat hidden behind any one of these points in quest of a prize. Not for a moment did I lay aside my glass, nor did I cease to scan the horizon with it. On leaving Long Point I had been warned by the picket there that American gunboats were constantly patrolling the lake, and that their fleet under Commodore Perry had been seen not far from the mouth of the Detroit River. However, I was not disturbed and not at all intimidated. I was young and my goods were paid for. If ill luck overtook me I could easily recover, whatever happened!

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But these considerations did not in any way lessen the necessity of taking the precaution which prudence and wisdom suggested in such circumstances. Besides, all these people with me had the right to expect from me the greatest possible care to bring them safe and sound to their journey's end.

When still some distance away I noticed a cottage on a cliff and advised the guide to land there for the night, to which he willingly agreed. I went up to the dwelling and found it occupied by a family of Germans named Wolff, who could speak a little English. There on the shore we passed the night, one of the most beautiful of the month of July, never once lighting a fire lest we attract the attention of the enemy. Our cook prepared the supper of bacon and peas in the house, the German asking nothing better than to oblige us. I bought a small supply of pork from him for the next day.

We talked a long time about the route, its dangers and places of refuge, and I decided to engage him as guide as far as Point Pelee, about eighty leagues from Amherstburg.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ The distance is nearer twenty leagues than eighty. Since Verchères was thoroughly familiar with the geographical situation, it seems probable that the statement in the text is due to the error of a copyist rather than of the author.

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I promised to give him twenty dollars for his services.

The good old fellow was a safe and careful guide. In the course of the day as we were passing some high cliffs known to be very dangerous in bad weather, but now under a bright warm sun, suddenly a black object was hurled through the air and fell in the water between my canoe and the one following. I could not imagine what it was. Then a fine deer came to the surface, having thought to take his bath among us, unluckily for him as he was soon clubbed to death with heavy blows of our oars. We pulled him out of the water and into one of the canoes, and when we camped that night we made a good supper of him, my men being gratified to have some fresh meat.

At dawn next day we were on our way. About two o'clock in the afternoon I saw with the glass some object on the horizon which it seemed prudent to investigate. It soon proved to be the American fleet, no doubt at all about it, and this terrible barrier presented a serious obstacle to our further progress. It was anchored at a point opposite Colonel Talbot's, whose storehouse the enemy had pillaged of four hundred barrels of flour some days previously. I consulted the old German and he assured me that the

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danger was not so near but that we could proceed for almost another mile to a little stream called Kettle Creek, and there we would be quite safe. We made this refuge and waited there two whole days in hopes that the enemy would take himself off any minute and leave the way clear for us. The third day the fleet was still there and I was almost desperate, but something had to be done. If we left our hiding place we could hope to escape only by passing between the enemy and the shore. There was no question of taking to the open lake. I crossed the wooded land to see for myself what distance the fleet lay from the shore; they were at least three miles out, and probably waiting for a favorable wind to sail away.

I had only two more days in which to finish the voyage according to agreement and I was very anxious to arrive on time. So without waiting for the favorable wind the Americans seemed so much to desire I decided to run the risk of an attack from them in the event we were discovered. Returning to my men I told them how matters stood, and that we would now free ourselves from this blockade. With infinite caution we succeeded in passing the fleet in the darkness of the night without being discovered and at dawn the next morning were happy in find-

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ing ourselves beyond the reach of their cannon.

The next point was called the Pines,⁴¹ famous for its rattlesnakes and therefore impossible as a camping place. We must of necessity go on to the next. The weather, too, seemed lowering. The wind came in gusts, piling up the waves. I gave orders to the guide to make a landing and we would have breakfast, though it was now near noon. While resting there, the wind freshened and the waves increased in height. Nevertheless my men continued the voyage, the German and myself following the canoes by land, keeping close to the shore. About five in the afternoon, with the wind stronger than ever and the waves running dangerously high, the canoes were obliged to take to the open lake lest they become grounded on the sandbars. Frequently they disappeared from sight in the trough of the waves and we would give them up for lost. I tried in every way possible to make them come ashore but all my signals were ignored, for the experienced voyageurs knew too well what to expect if they tried to land in such a sea. On the contrary, they decided to go on until

⁴¹ Frequently called Point au Pins, and now Rondeau National Park, maintained by the Dominion government.

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they reached a place sufficiently sheltered from the wind.

We had been walking along the shore for probably six or seven leagues when the German began to feel tired and expressed regret that he had not gone in one of the canoes. I was feeling much the same. The night was very dark and we had no idea what had become of the rest of our company. It was with difficulty we could distinguish the fallen trees in our path. We went ahead, taking one fall after another. My companion, no doubt wishing to comfort me, kept saying that the canoes were probably wrecked, for they were too heavily loaded.

Day was breaking when he fell down again, this time in a way that set me off laughing in spite of my anxiety, for he had fallen over a man whom I recognized at once as one of my employees. Stretched on some branches of a tree, he was sleeping like a dead man. I wakened him and begged him to tell me where his companions were. "They are all sleeping around here somewhere," he said. With the aid of a little torch which I made from some birch bark I soon found them all.

Parisien, the leader, then explained to me that he had found it necessary to keep far out in the lake to prevent the canoes from

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being stranded on the sandbars or even on the shore itself. Several times he had thought they were running aground, but at last they had made land, though not without accident, for one of the canoes had broken through in the middle and all the goods fell into the water. However, nothing was lost, with the exception of one small box. When it was fully light what was our surprise to find ourselves quite near Point Pelée, Point of Pines having been passed without knowing it. I could not but regret the loss of my poor little box for it contained a quantity of silverware for the savages and a complete Indian costume that had belonged to Mr. St. Luc de Lacorne,⁴² the gift of my aunt, who was his wife.

In the afternoon some Indians who were out bear hunting in the neighborhood came to our camp. I knew them, having often traded with them at Amherstburg. I didn't like the idea of rounding Point Pelée, exposed to the fire of the Americans who were

⁴² As an officer in the Seven Years War, St. Luc de Lacorne defended Canada against British attack, and as a British officer he defended it against the Americans in 1775-76. In 1777 he was the leader of the Canadian and Indian contingents in the army of General Burgoyne which surrendered at Saratoga. He was a member of the Legislative Council of Quebec from 1775 until his death in 1784.

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always in waiting there for some prey! I mentioned this to my acquaintances, when they offered to conduct me to a portage that would avoid this dangerous passage. They took us to the place indicated and here I said Good-bye to my German friend, who had given me such good service from the time I first met him.

When this last portage was accomplished we went on by water to a place inhabited by a colony of Germans⁴³ and thence pushed on vigorously in the direction of Amherstburg. While still some distance from this town we sighted three American vessels a short distance away. They were on the

⁴³ Following the close of the Revolution the British government provided a refuge for distressed loyalists and disbanded soldiers by laying out 200-acre lots stretching along the north shore of Lake Erie for many miles eastward from the mouth of Detroit River. This became known as New Settlement, and the town of Colchester was laid out as its market and educational center. Many of the refugees were Germans, some of whom had been brought to America as mercenary soldiers and had been captured at Saratoga in 1777. This is evidently the community to which the author alludes. One of its members was Daniel McKillip, whose holding was only a mile or two east of Colchester. McKillip was slain in the battle of Fallen Timbers, and his young widow subsequently became the wife of John Kinzie of early Chicago fame, and the inspirer of her gifted daughter-in-law in writing the book *Wau Bun*, the Lakeside Classics volume for 1932.

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lookout about two leagues from shore and from time to time would sail in sight of Amherstburg as though challenging the British fleet, which was anchored at the foot of Bois Blanc Island awaiting orders to measure forces with the enemy.

Favored by distance and darkness we happily passed this danger without accident and made no stop whatever during the whole night. In the morning we stopped to change our clothes that we might enter the town, so long the haven of our desires, suitably costumed. We breakfasted and then the canoes were joyfully directed thither. In passing the British fleet I had my canoe drawn up that I might make a report to the commander, Commodore Barclay, who graciously invited me aboard and expressed the sincere pleasure he felt in the success of my venture at a time when the communications were interrupted and very dangerous. Before taking leave I had to accept a glass of excellent Madeira, which was certainly not to be scorned. Descending to my canoe, which was lying alongside the vessel, we directed our course to Colonel Elliot's Point⁴⁴ where

⁴⁴ Elliot's Point, just below the town of Amherstburg, took its name from the adjoining farm and residence of Colonel Matthew Elliot, noted British Indian Superintendent and leader of the Indians in unnumbered

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the others were in waiting, and some minutes later I was again at home after an absence of seven months.

Immediately I was the center of a crowd of friends, all rejoiced to see me again, above all in times such as these. Several had even come out in a longboat to meet me, among them Major Muir, Captain Tallan, Dr. Faulkner, and Lieutenants Bender and Troughton. On the spot I disposed of all my liquor at the rate of ten dollars a gallon, half of it Jamaica rum and the other half wine, reserving only a very small quantity of the latter for my personal use. When I reached my store there was old Meloche still in charge, who seemed much surprised to see me.

The next day I was so busy in the store that I had scarcely any opportunity to examine my invoices and place the goods on the shelves. Customers were all about the place, inside and outside, and each had to await his turn. You see by this time they were in need of everything and no one wanted to miss such a splendid chance. The crowd became so great that in addition to my two clerks I was obliged to employ four of my

forays and campaigns against the Americans. The ruined remains of Colonel Elliot's home, built about the year 1784 are still standing, probably the oldest building in the entire Detroit River area.

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voyageurs whose experience and honesty were known to me. It was a great success, I do not deny, and I was proud of it all. The first day I took in more than two thousand four hundred dollars, the second eight hundred, and the third over sixteen hundred. On the last-named day I paid all my voyageurs and they immediately set off in one of my big canoes of which I had made them a present in token of my esteem.

Everybody, townsmen, soldiers, sailors, Indians, had a supply of army bills, bearing interest. The British government had now no merchandise to give the Indians for presents and had passed out this paper money as a substitute. Nor had any merchant dared to make the trip to Montreal either by land or water for a supply of goods, considering the dangers that must be encountered at every step. I was, therefore, master of the situation.

My health, it may readily be imagined, was such that I suffered great physical fatigue and much mental disturbance during this long, dangerous voyage, and five days after my return I had a second attack of ague and fever, known also as malarial fever, but fortunately it was not very serious. I was obliged to keep my bed for some days, however, and was attended by Dr. Allemand, who was as strong as a horse.

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There was now much questioning concerning the operations which were due to be made by Commodore Barclay as soon as the reinforcements which he was expecting from Newfoundland should arrive.⁴⁵ He was anxious to attack the American fleet anchored at the mouth of the river, opposite Bois Blanc Island. The encounter could hardly be postponed.

A few words in relation to the condition of commerce at this moment may not be out of place. Army bills bearing interest were so abundant, as also gold doubloons, that even the poorest savage had more of them in his tobacco pouch than he knew what to do with. Judge, therefore, my readers, how many more favored individuals were likely to have. Naturally, people were willing to hold on to the doubloons but merchandise was preferable to the paper money. The desire to obtain it, therefore, was overwhelming, regardless of the price, which was exorbitant. I did not dare fix it myself, in fact, for I was ashamed. Third quality mus-

⁴⁵ The Royal Newfoundland Regiment was organized in 1803. In the War of 1812 its members served as marines on Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. They were represented in most of the engagements on the Northwestern frontier, including Frenchtown, the Battle of Lake Erie, and the defense of Mackinac in 1814.

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lin sold for eight shillings a yard, cloth cost from four to five pounds sterling a yard, smoking tobacco was ten shillings a pound, and salt, which was very scarce, was as high as thirty dollars a bushel. Luckily I had bought a cargo of salt at Cayuga on the American side before the commencement of hostilities, and I still had thirty barrels on hand. Other things were in proportion. And while I was in the thick of my commercial dealings I was attacked by this wretched fever which, although quickly overcome, distressed me not a little.

Commodore Barclay now had orders from Sir James Yeo to sail to attack Perry on Lake Erie. He raised anchors about one in the afternoon and with a favorable wind was soon in touch with the enemy, the engagement beginning near the islands of Sandusky.⁴⁶ Our vessels were armed with cannon of heavy caliber, the guns from the fort being placed aboard the *Queen Charlotte* and the *St. Lawrence*, while the smaller guns—18, 25 and 32-pounders—were aboard the brigs. While the wind continued in our favor the Americans got the worst of it, but

⁴⁶ The author was not a participant in this battle, and his account is not wholly accurate. Barclay sailed in search of Perry early in the morning, and the battle began at 11:45 A.M.

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before long the breeze diminished and our big ships were unable to maneuver and their broadsides against the enemy began to weaken. The hostile gunboats were not slow to perceive our disadvantage and came up rapidly with a shower of bullets upon our fleet, firing with such skill and advantage that in a very short time all our cannon were silenced, a circumstance that augured badly for us. Perry, in fact, was victorious. He captured our whole fleet and conducted it to a place of safety among the Sandusky Islands.

We remained four or five days without receiving any definite news of the engagement. On the fifth day Procter, who now had the grade of general, anxious to know what had become of our fleet, dispatched some Indians during the night to seek whatever information would throw light on his anomalous position. Their report confirmed our worst fears.⁴⁷ The American flag floated over the British vessels.

⁴⁷ Various accounts agree that the cannonading could be heard at Amherstburg, and some of them indicate that its conclusion could be witnessed by anxious observers in the vicinity. Major Richardson states that, save as the battle smoke obscured the view, the fleets could be seen from the lake shore; the report of John Kinzie, a prisoner at Amherstburg at the time, of the outcome of the battle is related in Mrs. Kinzie's *Wau Bun*, 292-93. Regardless of the accuracy of these re-

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On receiving this disastrous news the British commander promptly issued a proclamation commanding all loyal subjects of His Majesty the King to follow the army to Sandwich, to which place he retreated upon evacuating Amherstburg. All the store-houses of the King, the barracks, the shipyard, etc., were burned, and desolation reigned supreme.

Not wishing to be considered lacking in loyalty, no matter what my loss, I prepared to take out with all possible haste as much of the merchandise in my store as I could, storing it in the houses of trusted inhabitants who could not leave home to go with the army, which was already on its way to Sandwich. I was still in the store making my final preparations when I was warned to hurry, for already the hostile fleet was in sight at Elliot's Point opposite Bois Blanc Island. I turned over my books and all my important papers to a friend, a reliable man, tied all the Army bills that I possessed, amounting to six thousand dollars, in a handkerchief about my waist as a belt, said

ports, it seems certain that Procter could not have remained long in ignorance of the result of the battle; the mere failure of the British fleet to return, would in itself have afforded convincing evidence of Barclay's defeat.

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Good-bye to my two clerks, old Meloche and his son, leaped upon my horse, and was off at a gallop. I was the last man to leave the town. At the Canard River I found the bridge destroyed. What to do I knew not and was cursing my ill luck when I spied a log and decided to cross the river, which is quite wide but not very deep, on it, with my horse swimming in tow. This was accomplished without accident in a few minutes of time, and I galloped at full speed to Petite Côte, where I made a brief call on Captain Bondy.⁴⁸ He gave me a glass of whiskey and water which I swallowed with as much pleasure as though it were the finest Madeira or the most expensive champagne. From Captain Bondy's I rode to the house of the Honorable Jacques Baby, and here I remained several days.

General Procter with the army and also the savages, some of whom had come in

⁴⁸ Captain Lawrence Bondy of the First Essex Militia, who was born at Sandwich in 1771 and who was fatally wounded at the siege of Fort Meigs in 1813. His grandfather, Joseph Bondy, came to Detroit from Lower Canada prior to 1732, married and reared a family here, and subsequently returned to Verchères, Quebec, where he died in 1760. The facts suggest that our author may probably have been acquainted with Captain Bondy's Quebec relatives before coming out to Amherstburg.

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canoes, reached Sandwich at the same time as myself. The soldiers pitched their tents and the officers were billeted among the people of the town. All that day we waited expectantly for the army of the American general, Harrison, aboard the fleet of Commodore Perry. We were all eager for a fight, but the Americans did not show up. Instead, they remained several days at Amherstburg, during which time Harrison issued a proclamation and circulated warrants against all who had followed the British troops. They hunted out the property belonging to these people and part of my goods were found in the possession of the persons where I had hidden them, and taken into the town by Major Puthuff.⁴⁹

The day following my unexpected arrival at the house of Mr. Baby, that hospitable gentleman gave a banquet, inviting General Procter, Major Muir, and several other officers of the Forty-first and of the artillery, Colonel Elliot, Superintendent of Indian

⁴⁹ Major William Henry Puthuff enlisted in the army from Ohio as a volunteer in 1812. He served throughout the war and at Detroit won the warmest esteem of the citizens. From 1815 to 1824 he held the office of Indian Agent at Mackinac. He died at Detroit July 16, 1824, and was accorded an imposing funeral two days later. See *Detroit Gazette* July 23, 1824; *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 407-408.

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Affairs, the famous Shawnee chief Tecumseh, Sheriff William Hands,⁵⁰ and his brothers, Jean Baptiste and Francis Baby. Tecumseh was seated at my left with his pistols on either side of his plate and his big hunting knife in front of him. He wore a red cloak, trousers of deerskin, and a printed calico shirt, the whole outfit a present from the English. His bearing was irreproachable for a man of the woods as he was, much better than that of some so-called gentlemen.

The first courses had been served and disposed of when there came a knock on the dining-room door and a sergeant entered, who without further ceremony announced that the fleet was at this moment coming up the river, though there was but a light breeze and it was making very slow progress. Tecumseh did not understand all that was being said but he arose from the table and had the words of the sergeant explained to him by Colonel Elliot's interpreter, a man

⁵⁰ William Hands was born near London in 1756. He was engaged in trade at Detroit as early as 1781. Following the American occupation he removed to Sandwich, preferring to remain a British subject. Here he held numerous offices of public trust, and here he died, Feb. 20, 1836. His wife was Mary Abbott of Detroit. Her brother, James Abbott, in 1804 married at Chicago Sarah Whistler, eldest daughter of Captain John Whistler, the builder of Fort Dearborn.

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named Cadotte, who was in waiting in an adjoining room. The chief turned pale and placing a hand on each of his pistols addressed General Procter in these words: "Father, we must go to meet the enemy and prevent him from coming here. We are quite numerous enough. We must not retreat, for if you take us from this post you will lead us far, far away, perhaps even to the shores of the great salt lake, and there you will tell us Good-bye forever, and leave us to the mercy of the Longknives. I tell you I am sorry I have listened to you thus far, for if we had remained at the town we have just left we could have taken our stand behind the great sandbanks of Father Elliot's point; here, without any doubt we could have prevented the enemy from landing and kept our hunting grounds for our children. Now they tell me you want to withdraw to the River Thames and there entrench yourself and build bakehouses for the soldiers. I am tired of it all. Every word you say evaporates like the smoke from our pipes. Father, you are like the crawfish that does not know how to walk straight ahead."⁵¹

⁵¹ The author here presents another interesting version of Tecumseh's speech protesting the British evacuation of Amherstburg and Detroit. It should be compared with Major Richardson's version, given in

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As soon as the chief concluded this harangue, all hurried to pack up preparatory to a retreat that same day to the River Thames. The fleet had already reached Turkey Island, halfway up the river.

Orders were at once sent to Fort Detroit, still in our possession, to evacuate without delay and to cross the river to this place. Before leaving they were to burn all the buildings that might be of use to the enemy. Soon the fire was doing its work. It was a beautiful if sad sight that met our eyes that third of October, 1813.⁵²

Richardson's *War of 1812*, 205-206. Richardson and others commonly agree that the speech was delivered at Amherstburg instead of at Sandwich. Although not identified with this particular speech, Amherstburg residents still point out a boulder on which Tecumseh is supposed to have stood when addressing his followers.

⁵² The author's chronology is again at fault. The American victory of Lake Erie, Sept. 10, 1813, compelled the abandonment of Detroit, since Procter could no longer provision his army here. He evacuated Amherstburg on Sept. 26, having first destroyed the public works and stores. Harrison entered Amherstburg Sept. 27, and on the twenty-ninth advanced to Sandwich. The same day he sent a regiment across the river to reoccupy Detroit. Procter had destroyed the public buildings on the twenty-seventh, and retiring eastward, reached the River Thames on the twenty-ninth. Harrison resumed his advance from Sandwich October 2, and on October 5 overtook and destroyed Procter's army in the Battle of the Thames. The

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The British troops and the Indians at once started on the march for the River Thames. I was also en route with three companions, Messrs. Woolsey and Voyer of Quebec, and another man named Bergeron. We four were on horseback, with the intention of going on to Montreal if we could, and followed the army at a little distance, stopping from time to time at the houses of settlers whom we knew. The Americans were in close pursuit, but were unable to get their vessels up the river, and the soldiers, commanded by Harrison, were disembarked at its mouth. For five days we awaited their coming, stationed a short distance from the Moravian village at the house of a distiller named Dolsen, and where some of the soldiers amused themselves by drinking whiskey. It was our sixth day when Harrison and his men disembarked. The Kentuckians followed the right bank of the river while the rest marched directly upon our camp. The two sides having joined in battle we were completely defeated in no time. The Forty-first Regiment and some companies of New-

victory added much to Harrison's fame, but the popular emphasis is largely misplaced; the vigor with which he conducted the pursuit is commendable; the actual battle was a forlorn-hope affair on the part of the British, and its issue was a foregone conclusion.

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foundlanders were made prisoners, and Tecumseh, who was on the other side of the river, was killed. According to some of our officers who were taken to Detroit as prisoners of war, that brave warrior was hacked into little pieces by the enraged Kentuckians and taken to Detroit, but I have never really believed this barbarous story. The rout was as unexpected as it was complete. Two of our horses were killed and the other two stolen, probably by the Potawatomi, who are as great horse thieves as the Bedouins of the desert. Procter was in full flight with the remnant of his little army.⁵³

As I was well acquainted with the road to York I proposed to these gentlemen to go

⁵³ The author's account of the events attending the destruction of Procter's army is both sketchy and inaccurate. Dolsen's, where Procter made a temporary stand, was about fifteen or sixteen miles above the mouth of the Thames, and the battleground of October 5 was a similar distance above Dolsen's. Both Harrison's troops and Procter's followed the north side of the Thames from its mouth as far as Dolsen's, since the only available road then ran along this side of the river. At the battle of October 5, however, all the forces engaged were on one side (the right) of the river. Tecumseh and his Indians held the right of the British line, and Procter's regulars and militia the left, adjoining the river; the length of the entire line, from the river to the swamp (which protected the British right flank) was somewhat less than a mile.

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through the woods. We struck out in the direction of Oxford, whither a party of the Forty-first Regiment had also fled. It had been erroneously reported that this regiment had been entirely captured by the enemy; these soldiers made their way to the British headquarters at Burlington Heights.

I should relate that before the battle several ladies, the wives of officers, had left the camp to go farther down from the Moravian village and there take a large bark canoe for Oxford. After the battle was lost we repaired to the same place whence these ladies had set out and rented a second canoe which had just been gummed, the property of Mr. Larocque or Mr. Lacroix, both merchants of Montreal, to take us also to Oxford, where the river ceased to be navigable.

Without loss of time, we took our places in the canoe, the ladies having preceded us not more than an hour. The day was dark and disagreeable, the wind blowing a gale with frequent showers of cold rain. Everything tended to make us the prey of an all-pervading gloom, as in truth we were. The River Thames narrowed considerably as we proceeded and the bottom bristled with the trunks of trees, making navigation very dangerous for a bark canoe.

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I tried to learn the names of the ladies who had preceded us but no one knew who they were. All anyone could say was that some of them were the wives of officers who had been taken prisoners by the Americans; from Oxford they would be obliged to go to Toronto in a wagon. We gradually gained on their canoe and were not more than a gunshot distant when suddenly piercing shrieks smote our ears. The canoe had foundered on the trunk of a tree hidden under the water; it commenced to leak on all sides and everyone in it faced almost certain death. The worthless wretches who had brought them this far, instead of exerting themselves to save these poor drowning women, competed with each other in seeing who would be first to shore, which they quickly reached. We boiled with rage and our indignation knew no bounds. Employing our utmost exertions we quickly reached the scene of the accident. Never shall I forget the supplications of one poor woman that we save the infant she held in her arms. This we did and the mother also, placing them both in the canoe. Mr. Voyer then pulled another out of the water and seated her beside her companion. There was still a third to rescue, but our canoe was already overloaded and in danger of swamping if we made the slightest move. What

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was to be done? The woman was gifted with rare courage and this proved her salvation. At our suggestion she clung fast to the canoe with admirable coolness and was towed ashore. The gratitude of these unhappy women may easily be imagined.

None of their effects were lost, however, as the canoe did not overturn, though nearly filled with water. The men set about repairing it and were soon ready to re-embark. Although saved from shipwreck, the ladies would be exposed to certain illness if they continued the journey before they had dried their soaked clothing, but those gross barbarians even yet seemed not to notice anything wrong and ordered them into the canoe at once. I remarked to Mr. Woolsey that with such a craft it was our duty to keep them in sight. He agreed with me, as did also our two companions. It was really all we could do, seeing that our canoe was too small to hold us all at one time, and we could not urge them to wait until their clothes were dry and then have them take passage with us.

Their canoe left about half an hour before ours but it was impossible for us to overtake them. I was under the impression that they intended to travel all night and so be out of reach as quickly as possible of the attacks

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of the enemy, who were hotly pursuing the remnant of our troops. We were now only three leagues in a direct line from our starting point although, owing to the windings of the river, we had traveled more than seven.

It was now ten o'clock in the evening and we were advised that it would be safer for us to camp for the night. We therefore directed our course to the south side of the river, opposite to that on which the highway the Americans were following ran, and we decided not to make a fire, lest we attract their notice. Profound silence reigned all about us. We were preparing for a much needed and well-earned rest when we heard the echo of blows made by an axe. We strained our ears to listen. The sound ceased, then was immediately renewed. Cautiously I advanced in the direction from which the blows came. To my great surprise I saw beyond some big trees, by the feeble light of a little fire, the men who had preceded us. I at once retraced my steps to report my discovery to my companions. Mr. Voyer was the only one awake and he willingly agreed to go back with me.

We found these men seated around the fire but the ladies were too far away to feel anything whatever of its beneficent effects. They were still completely soaked and the

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night was quite chilly, with the wind blowing from the northeast. Their blankets were wet, as also their camp beds. With nothing to eat and in such a pitiful plight, it was impossible not to be affected even to tears.

We reproached the men bitterly, destitute as they were of all feelings of humanity, and threatened to report their infamous conduct, sitting there before the ladies and taking up all the fire. These poor creatures, one with a little child on her knees, wept tears of sympathy. Would you believe it, that unfortunate mother was only nineteen years of age; the other ladies were very little older.

Mr. Voyer made them a good fire at the risk of being surprised by the enemy, seeing we were so near the river, and this gave them new life. Before leaving them to go to our camp for provisions, for they had eaten nothing since the accident, I stretched their blankets before the flames to dry them a little and assure these women a comfortable rest for the remainder of the night. I returned with Mr. Voyer to our camp and hastened to waken Mr. Woolsey, who was in charge of our small supply of food, and told him of the wretched condition of these unfortunate women. He was a kind-hearted man and the story appealed so strongly to

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him that he offered to return to them with us, but this I would not allow because his health was very bad. He forced us to take a little port wine in addition to some sugar, tea, bread, etc., and we hurried back to the ladies. I do not exaggerate when I say that they welcomed us as having saved their lives. We soon had some water boiling and they drank their tea in absolute content. The blankets were now quite dry and they could wrap themselves for the much needed rest with no fear of cold. Before leaving them we poured for each a good glass of wine to warm their benumbed limbs. They tendered us a thousand thanks for our charity, as they were pleased to call it, and we took our leave, never to see them again. It was nearly two o'clock in the morning when we returned and lay down for a rest of some hours.

At dawn the next morning we resumed our journey. In passing the place where their canoe had been the evening before, I saw that they had already started, although not much earlier, for their fire was still burning. We made no further stop until we reached Oxford about two o'clock in the afternoon, a small place containing only a few houses. There we learned that the ladies had come in an hour previously and were lodged in one

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of the houses; satisfied with this news, I did not go to call on them.

Here we abandoned our canoe and started out on foot. A disagreeable rain fell all day long and the road through the woods was unusually bad. I had a small traveling-bag, the kind one usually fastens at the back of the saddle. When I was leaving Sandwich on horseback I was reminded of it and so I had brought it along. It did not hold much, I can assure you. A couple of towels, a cake of soap, a razor, a traveling-mirror, two shirts, and a pocket handkerchief, that was all. I still had my belt filled with Army bills tied around my waist.

At midnight we camped in the woods, making a little shelter from the rain, which continued to fall heavily. Our provisions were gone, the ground was wet and forbidding, and the water trickled steadily down our necks, not a pleasant feeling, you will admit, and little conducive to sleep. We were off again very early the next morning, despite the rain, and did not halt until four in the afternoon. Our weariness was oppressive but not more so than the devouring hunger. Suddenly we came upon a little house, which we entered, and I asked an elderly woman whom we found there if she could give us something to eat, for which we

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would pay her well. "Yes," she said, in a sarcastic tone of voice, "that is what two runaway soldiers said. They promised to pay me well and after they had eaten my bread and drunk my milk they went off without giving me anything. No, I haven't a bite for you!" I insisted, and told her she must have something left and that she would have to give it to us, willy-nilly; I added that we were starving and that she would surely be paid this time for whatever she gave us to appease our hunger. She then boiled a cabbage for us and charged us one dollar each for it. Evidently we were to pay heavily for the two dishonest soldiers. This sum was handed to her at once and without comment, for we would not take advantage of our strength to resist her imposition.

In the twinkling of an eye this frugal meal disappeared and we resumed our road, which became steadily worse. We met a patrol of a dozen British dragoons who were on their way to protect from the Americans those who were too hard pressed to leave General Procter. The news of the defeat had reached headquarters at Burlington Heights. These men advised us to hurry, for it was rumored that the American cavalry was hard on our heels, having already made prisoners of several soldiers.

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We had no sooner received this comforting intelligence when in passing through a cedar swamp full of roots I was unlucky enough to get caught in one of these and could extricate myself from this awkward position only by leaving my boot behind. This accident, coming at the moment when it was necessary to make all haste so as not to fall into the hands of the enemy, was most unfortunate for me. I was obliged to go on, one foot booted, the other bare. It was very painful walking in this way among the roots and stumps, and the more so that I could not now keep up with my companions as I wished to do.

About five o'clock in the afternoon, we saw a house on the outskirts of the forest and I begged my friends as a favor to stop there, all of us, and rest and if possible get a little food, the cabbage having scarcely affected our hunger. There was a chance, also, that I might get a boot to replace the one I had so unexpectedly lost, for I could not walk farther half shod as I was. We went in, and were welcomed so hospitably that we spent the night there in much comfort. I was also thankful to find an old pair of boots for which I paid fourteen dollars, and if the owner had asked it I would gladly have paid much more, so anxious was I to be shod on both feet.

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The next morning we said Good-bye to our good Samaritans and by noon we agreed that we must be near enough to the Grand River to have no further fear of encountering the enemy. Just then we met a man wearing a blue cloak with a red collar and mounted on a big, fine horse. At first we thought he might be an American cavalryman, but addressing me in English he asked if I knew anything about the defeat of the Forty-first Regiment, and I saw at once that he was not. I replied that we ourselves belonged to that regiment and that for the most part it had been captured and sent to Detroit, that the remainder were being pursued by the enemy and were scattered through the woods trying to make their way to headquarters. As for us, we intended to go on to Montreal by way of York. After some further conversation he inquired anxiously if we knew anything of the ladies attached to the army of General Procter. "Yes," I said, "the wife of Major Muir is on the way in a wagon with her children. She is perhaps at Oxford where some other ladies arrived yesterday in a canoe." I then gave him an account of their accident, which seemed to cause him unusual alarm. "Was there a young woman with a baby among them," he asked anxiously. "But that is the very one I rescued!"

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I answered. "Oh Lord!" he cried, "that is my daughter and her child." His tears fell as he explained that he was even now hurrying to meet them. "Gentlemen," he cried, "before we part, kindly give me your names that I may always remember you!" "This is Mr. Woolsey of Quebec," I said, "formerly of the second battalion of Royal Canadians. This is Mr. J. Voyer, also of Quebec, brother of Colonel Voyer in command of the third battallion of incorporated militia, while I am from the parish of Boucherville." "What!" he cried, "Boucherville? Are you the son of the Seigneur of that name? Not the one called Verchères?" "Yes, Sir!" I answered. Dismounting from his horse, he came up to me and said, "My name is William Claus,⁵⁴ Indian Superintendent for this district of Upper Canada. At one time, when I had the honor of being stationed with my regiment, the Sixtieth, at Boucherville, the house of your distinguished father, as also several others, was open to me and I spent some

⁵⁴ Colonel William Claus was a grandson of Sir William Johnson, and a nephew of Sir John Johnson, one of the most noted loyalists of the Revolution and after 1783 Superintendent-general of Indian Affairs in North America. By reason of his family connections, Claus enjoyed the confidence of the Iroquois, and on June 13, 1796, he was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Niagara. He died there in 1826.

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happy hours there. You were young at the time and may not recall coming to see me at my house, near the dwelling of Mr. de la Bruere, your kinsman. You were very fond of playing at being a soldier." I remembered then, vaguely at first, then more vividly as I recalled the events to which he referred. The good man could not find words in which to thank us. Pressing the hands of all three of us, he cried, "Come! Come, I say! Tell Mrs. Claus who you are and you will be at home there. Do not fail to tell her how you rescued her daughter and child. She is the daughter of Captain Hale,⁵⁵ of the Forty-first Regiment. Never! never can we forget you, Gentlemen, Good-bye." He set off then at full gallop in the direction of Oxford.

We were then only six leagues from the Grand River which empties into Lake Erie at a village called Six Nations. Captain Brant had his home here and a man named Norton,⁵⁶ the first an Indian and the other

⁵⁵ Probably Lieutenant Harris Hailes, later colonel of the Twenty-eighth Regiment, whose name might readily be misspelled. He was captured by General Harrison at the siege of Fort Meigs in May, 1813, and again at The Thames on October 5 following.

⁵⁶ John Norton was a half-breed, his mother being Scotch and his father a Mohawk. He was educated in England, and following the death of Chief Joseph Brant in 1807 put himself forward as the principal chief

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a Scotchman, but living like an Indian. We slept that night in the village, where there was a very good inn. There was much lamenting here for we were now among our own people, British subjects. Until now all whom we met were more inclined to help the Americans than the English. Most of the people in that part of Oxford were Americans and consequently republican to the marrow.

We reached Burlington Heights in a rain that had not ceased for four days and went to the house of Mr. McKay who, as I have already mentioned, kept a store there for Mr. St. George. After drying our clothes and eating an excellent dinner we again set out and late that evening reached the Credit River, a short distance from York, where we put up at a very good hotel.

The next day at noon we entered York and went to the house of Mr. St. George, who was much surprised to see us. From a messenger of General Procter, Mr. Reiffen- of the Mohawk. Another account represents that he was a Scotchman who, after service as a private in the British army, settled on Grand River, where he adopted the Indian mode of life. Whatever his origin may have been, he was accepted by the British Indian Department as a Mohawk chief. In the War of 1812 he led the Mohawk contingent in the battle of Queenston. He was living as late as the spring of 1819.

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stein, he had heard that part of the Forty-first Regiment had been made prisoners, and that I was among the number. He kept us with him three days until we were thoroughly rested.

Mrs. Muir, the Major's wife, had left Moraviantown before us in a wagon with all her family, and we had the pleasure of meeting her in York. I must remark in passing, that women as courageous as she was are extremely rare. She had not hesitated a moment to set out in a wagon with her young children, to go forty or fifty leagues through a country almost devoid of settlers, with steep hills difficult to descend and much more so to climb, and this in a time of war when savages were roaming the woods ready to scalp anyone they met. I cannot praise too highly the spirit of that remarkable woman.

During our stay in York I went to see Mrs. Claus, to whom I related the incident of the River Thames and our meeting with her husband, Colonel Claus. She overwhelmed me with thanks and begged me to bring my two companions to her, which I did most gladly. They, too, received a gracious welcome. More, she insisted that we should remain at her house until the return of her husband, but the season was

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advancing and it was impossible for us to take advantage of her hospitality.

We each bought a horse for the journey from York to Montreal and on the fourth day were forced to say Good-bye to our worthy friend, Mr. St. George, not without heartfelt sorrow, on my part at least, for I feared the effect of the war on his business. The Americans had now complete control of Lake Ontario, and our loss of the western front and the death of General Brock at Queenston all tended to give them courage and to induce them to make a raid on York and burn the town, thus causing the ruin of my generous benefactor.

On our arrival at Kingston we were advised to provide ourselves with passports, as otherwise we would be sent back to York when we reached Gananoque. I therefore sought out Colonel Vincent, the commander of the garrison, to obtain them. As briefly as possible, I gave him an account of the defeat of our army in the West. He expressed his pleasure in being thus informed and thanked me for telling him. Then the three passports were made out and handed to me.

We left Kingston in the morning and were at Gananoque a little after three in the afternoon. As we came near the blockhouse,

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which was built close to the highway, we noticed an officer of the Voltigeurs approaching in our direction. Thinking he wished to examine our passports we drew rein, but imagine my pleasant surprise in recognizing a fellow-student at college, whom I had not seen for many years. It was Captain Jacques Viger, and on my part this meeting was as happy as it was unexpected. However, our conversation must necessarily be brief for he had work to do and so had we.

At Prescott I met another friend, Lieutenant Norbert Vignau, of the same regiment. Our sojourn here lasted a few minutes only, for the enemy were amusing themselves by sending shells over from Ogdensburg. We therefore went farther down for our camp, not wishing to have the honor of having our heads broken to no purpose.

On October 24, at three in the afternoon, we reached Montreal. The state of our clothes may easily be imagined. We were literally in rags. As soon as we had stabled our horses at an inn, my companions and myself paid a visit to a merchant. I then repaired to Government House, where General Prevost lived, hoping to see my brother, his aide-de-camp, after which I would present my respects to His Excellency, whom I had met at Quebec the previous winter.

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Entering the parlor, I was accosted by an aide-de-camp who no doubt took me for a beggar, for he told me in plain terms that I would find the door communicating with the kitchen in the rear. Taken wholly by surprise I said, "Sir, you are mistaken, I am not a beggar. I come solely to see His Excellency, Sir George Prevost, and for nothing else." "You cannot see him," he replied curtly. "Tell me the truth. If you want to be let off from going with the local militia to the front, I can tell you without further parley that it is no use. You must do as the others and go to join them. You are no doubt a coward or you would not come here in this manner." My ears reddened and passion almost overcame me; I was so enraged that I could scarcely speak.

However, I succeeded in controlling my indignation sufficiently to speak quietly: "I wish to see His Excellency," I said. "You should not judge a man by appearances. I am a soldier who has served his country and shed his blood for his King, and I demand access to him as one coming from the army of the West commanded by General Procter." On hearing this he was overcome with surprise and made me a thousand apologies. He then hastened to conduct me to Sir George, who immediately had me admitted

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to his presence in the large room he used as an office. On entering, he shook hands with me, to the great embarrassment of his aide-de-camp. I begged His Excellency to pardon the liberty I had taken in appearing before him so unsuitably clad, adding as an extenuation for my presumption that a flag fresh from the hands of its maker is never so beautiful as when returning from the field of battle soiled and torn. This appeared to please him for he motioned me to take a seat beside him. He asked a great many questions about the details of Procter's defeat and I told him frankly, to the best of my knowledge, what I knew of the circumstances.

As the local militia was now at the front I asked him respectfully if he wished me to go immediately to join my battalion under the command of Colonel de Lery. "No! Stay with your mother a while and rest. She is alone." I thanked him gratefully for this high mark of his favor and retired.

Without loss of time I repaired to Boucherville. Arriving at the paternal home I found my mother talking about me with Mme. de LaBruere, née Weilbrenner. Imagine her surprise when she saw my figure outlined in the doorway. She had heard of our disaster in Upper Canada but no word of my coming down had reached her. What unspeakable

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joy I experienced in seeing once again my good mother, my beloved sister, Mme. L. C. de Lery, and Mme. de LaBruere. The husbands of the last two ladies were at the front.

The first thing I did after reaching home was to throw away my wretched clothes. Everything I had on was saturated with dampness, the continual downfall of rain during our journey having penetrated, as it seemed, to our very bones. My poor mother could not believe I carried so much money; neither could Mme. de LaBruere. The latter had the curiosity to count the Army bills in my handkerchief and the figures included in my letters of exchange. The amount seemed incredible to them, after an absence of such brief duration.

Seven or eight days after my arrival home an alarming report spread through the country. It was rumored that the American General Hampton was on his way with a strong army to join General Dearborn for the conquest of Canada. Clearly it was my duty to hurry to the post where honor called. Accordingly, I went at once to Montreal, purchased a gray military cloak and a sword, and repaired to Chateauguay where De Lery's battalion, in which I held the rank of junior major, was stationed. It was late in the evening when I reached the lodgings of

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my colonel, a smoky little house. My brother-in-law was sound asleep, as was also his senior major, Moses Raymond of Laprairie. One of the militiamen lit a candle for me and this roused the two officers, who asked him what was the matter. They were both much surprised to see me and gave me a cordial welcome. We talked a long time of my journey and the news of their respective families, and then retired for the remainder of the night. The next day I had nothing more pressing to do than to seek other lodgings, which I obtained at the house of a Mr. Baxter, a little distance from the others but at any rate quite comfortable. Every morning at three o'clock we marched about half a league from camp to a place called the alarm camp and remained there until daylight. I thought this a very silly and useless maneuver, but what could I say or do? Such were our orders and they must be obeyed. We then returned to eat our rations, for which we had a good appetite.

The only march I had to make during all my stay at this place was to go on foot with some companies to the camp of the Voltigeurs commanded by Colonel de Salaberry at Four Corners. On my arrival I went to the tent occupied by Captain Hertel de Rouville to get something to eat for I was as

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hungry as a dog. I devoured a great piece of bacon, all the while complaining that it was not chicken. In the evening I returned from my expedition, exhausted with climbing over fallen trees every minute or two.

The next day the three of us were invited to dine with General de Watteville. He was a French officer in command of an auxiliary Spanish regiment and had his quarters some little distance away in a very good house. With him lived Surgeon Burke of the Fortyninth Regiment, whom I had known at Amherstburg before the war, when a part of this regiment was in garrison there. The dinner lasted four hours and we had been at it for some time; I was exchanging the news of the day with the doctor when I suddenly noticed a large number of bottles arranged in two rows. I asked him if all of them contained wine. "Yes," he said, "and it is a funny thing about this damned Frenchman that when they are empty he orders them 'rear rank, take open orders' and I have to go and examine them to see if all are in order. Then comes 'close order,' and our dinner is over, as you will see for yourself directly." Doctor Burke was a great joker; I do not remember ever to have met his equal.

We stayed here almost a month eating the King's rations and not accomplishing any-

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thing. Soon the weather became quite cold. The Americans had withdrawn to their winter quarters and orders came to us to do the same. In a word, this was the only inconvenience our militia of Lower Canada experienced during the greater part of the war, with the exception of the glorious engagements between the Voltigeurs and the organized militia with the enemy at Chateauguay, and elsewhere.

I had no sooner returned home than I fell sick with the pleurisy and was not out again all that winter. I was under the care of Dr. Blyth and at the most critical period of my illness he insisted that I tell him all about the behavior of Tecumseh during all the time he was with our army.

In the spring of 1814 I went to Quebec and spent my time promenading the city to regain my health. Mr. St. George came down from York to rejoin me and we had merry times together visiting some of the best families in the city.

In January, 1815, I set out for Kamouraska with my brother. It was so cold that we had to cover our mouths with the carriage robe in order to breathe. We stayed with Seigneur Tache two days, receiving a most cordial welcome, and on our return journey visited at Riviere Ouelle, St. Thomas, and

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other places with friends of my brother. Everywhere we were welcomed with open arms. When spring came I went to Montreal in a little schooner with Colonel Frémont's family. A strong northeast wind enabled us to make the trip in two days. From there I journeyed to Boucherville, not losing a single minute in going to embrace my mother. It was my intention to return to Amherstburg, which had been evacuated by the Americans at the close of the war, to find out what had become of my merchandise, books, bonds, notes, and other property there. I bought some goods to defray the expenses of the journey and at Repentigny purchased a bark canoe from a man named Lottinville, who was famous among the Northwesters as the builder of fine canoes.

Early in June, therefore, I set out in my canoe manned by six good fellows and in ten days was at York. I made a beeline for Mr. St. George's house, as he had delayed his departure for Lower Canada expressly to see me. But our visit was very brief. We were both anxious to reach our respective destinations, and the next day found me en route, going by way of Niagara that I might see for myself what the country was like between Fort George and Fort Erie. Everywhere I saw devastation, homes in ashes,

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fields trampled and laid waste, forts demolished, forests burned and blackened, truly a most pitiful sight. At Queenston I sought out the spot where our brave General Brock fell with his equally brave aide-de-camp Macdonell. It was in a corner of the Second garden, at the foot of a high bluff.

At Fort Erie I inspected the old British fort, within whose walls so many soldiers of the Eighth and Watteville Regiments had perished the year before in a disastrous explosion.⁵⁷ All these brave fellows were buried in the neighborhood, and I paid a devout visit to their tombs.

We re-embarked with the merchandise and were soon making our way over the lake, coasting the British shore. The canoe was chiefly manned by Boucherville men. The steersman was Paul St. Germain, and he sang from morning till night with really remarkable spirit, always giving us something new and in harmony with the occasion. He was a model voyageur in this respect, and in many others as well. The music kept time with the movement of the oars and we made

⁵⁷ The allusion is to the British assault on Fort Erie, August 15, 1814. For a detailed account of this affair see Louis L. Babcock, *The War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier* (Buffalo Hist. Soc. Pubs., Vol. XXIX), Chap. 14.

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astonishing progress. With no fear of meeting an enemy, it was a pleasant and peaceful voyage, and I yielded completely to the charms of memory. The weather was ideal, mild and with a soft breeze. How greatly my present voyage differed from the last one!

Now I was nearing Amherstburg and already rejoicing in the thought of meeting my former friends. Several were waiting for me at the landing, and I was kindly received by all my acquaintances and by a crowd of Indians with whom I had been connected in 1812-1813. All wanted to shake my hand and to congratulate me on my happy return to them, at the same time expressing the hope that I had come to reopen my store and trade with them as I had done before the war. This was in fact my intention, but I must first assure myself that the country could support such a trade, after being scourged by such a disastrous war.

On landing, I went to the house of my friend Maisonville, who would not listen to my going to an hotel. My goods were stored with Mr. William Duff, and after a few hours rest, accompanied by Mr. Maisonville, I set out to see what changes the war had made in the town. Directing my steps to the site of my former home, I found it in

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the saddest state imaginable. The Americans had used it as a guardhouse. Everywhere one met nothing but dirt, the streets were in a disgusting condition, and everything reflected distress and poverty. I then paid a visit to my clerks, whom I had left behind when departing from Amherstburg.

In the course of the evening Mr. Maisonneville told me much of the gossip of the place, which interested me keenly. The Thirty-seventh Regiment, with Colonel James in command, had entered the town the same day the Americans evacuated it to retire to Detroit. Every-one liked the Colonel well enough but it was otherwise with his officers. For some unknown reason they were too haughty with the merchants, and especially with the French-Canadians, whom they wrongfully regarded as lazy and disloyal subjects. Every evening they would promenade the town, conducting themselves rather as blackguards than as gentlemen, and insulting the ladies and the young girls. It was obvious that they were very conceited.

A serious rupture with the townspeople was inevitable, and it was not long delayed. There was a fight one night in which one of these bullies got a good beating and a couple of black eyes. He at once sent a challenge to one of the merchants, who accepted it

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without the flicker of an eyelash. However, the lieutenant who was said to have been insulted was packed off to Fort Erie by an order of his Colonel on the very morning of the day fixed for the duel. It was a trick, pure and simple, on the part of the officers of the Regiment that they might replace this inexperienced lieutenant with a renowned duellist, a man, however, who had never interfered with the townspeople. He was a Frenchman named Lopineau, and the Regiment gleefully anticipated the poor citizen stretched out dead on the so-called field of honor. The duel took place at Grosse Ile on the American side, before a crowd of people attracted either by curiosity or sympathy. After the usual preliminaries, the two weapons were discharged simultaneously, and the officer fell pierced by a bullet, although not mortally wounded, to the unspeakable joy, I must admit, of the merchant, who had fought a duel for the first time in his life, against an adversary reputed to be a dead shot and who was, in fact, fighting his twelfth duel. The officer was placed in a longboat and taken to the garrison on our side of the river. He suffered severely from his wound for some days, when he asked to be taken to Quebec where he could receive better care. Before leaving Amherstburg he

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told his more fortunate adversary that he deeply regretted having been obliged to fight against him but that he could not help it, as the honor of the Regiment was at stake. This sorry affair put an end to the trouble between civilians and military. The officers had learned, you see, of what stuff the townspeople were made, to use a common expression.

Some days later I spent a week at Sandwich but did not venture to cross the river to Detroit lest I be apprehended for the part I had played in the affair with the Lewiston customs officer in 1811. I might easily be reminded even yet of that night escapade. During my absence from Amherstburg, Colonel James issued an order requesting the names of all those who had suffered losses in the war and before my return the examination was unfortunately closed, so far as my interests were concerned. I put in a claim but the report was already on its way to York, and I have never been able to obtain payment for the merchandise which was pillaged by the Americans. However, I spoke to Colonel Baby about it before I left for Montreal and I wrote to Colonel Claus, in whom I placed great confidence, both gentlemen having much influence at York and elsewhere.

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Old Meloche, my clerk, knew of all the circumstances connected with the storing of the merchandise at the time of Procter's precipitate departure, and knew, too, that it had become the spoil of the enemy, together with all my books and papers, silverware, and other articles that I had been forced to leave behind. He had interceded, but without success, with the American commander, Puthuff. My departure with the British army was the sole reason for treating me so badly. The goods were worth at least eight thousand dollars. So that was what the war did for me. After so many years of hard work a good part of my earnings was wiped out!

Fully realizing that I could not continue in business at Amherstburg with any profit, I sold out as much of the goods as I could and left the remainder with Meloche to sell for me, remitting the proceeds to me at Boucherville after deducting his salary. In the middle of July, I took final leave of the place, but not without regret, for I had some sincere friends there. The savages exhibited deep distress over my departure, showing such signs of sorrow that I was keenly affected and my spirits much depressed. I gave them a small present of ten dollars. After my departure they spent it on a royal spree.

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I now set out for York, where I hoped to meet Mr. St. George, embarking on the *Mohawk*. We sailed as far as Point Pelee, where we had to wait a little while before taking to the open lake. Soon the wind freshened and shifted some degrees and we hoisted full sail, but as night approached it became a gale. Huge waves dashed against the sides of our vessel and broke with a crash. We all promptly became seasick, not even excepting those, who, like myself, had never been affected before, although I had crossed Lake Superior in one of its fiercest storms. The wind steadily increased its violence and suddenly our mainmast snapped off clean at the bridge and the sails dragged in the water. Our situation was exceedingly critical. Billows washed over the side of the ship, so completely drenching us that I thought each bath was to be my last. Happily we had a good crew, who extricated us from the danger, and as the ship regained its equilibrium it became more manageable. The wind gradually became less violent and our fears were quickly dissipated. At sunset perfect calm prevailed, although three days passed before we came in sight of Fort Erie. I settled with the captain and left for Niagara, where I embarked in the schooner *Toronto* for York. There I hastened to call

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upon Mr. St. George, who decided to accompany me to Lower Canada. Seldom did he refuse any request of mine. After a pleasant voyage we arrived at Boucherville, where Mr. St. George remained in our home several days, awaiting the arrival of his goods from England. They did not come, however, until in the month of August.

I was a partner in this shipment, which ended disastrously enough. Peace with America was proclaimed and prices cascaded to one-fourth the existing scale. I turned over all the cash I possessed. I had no regrets, but things looked black indeed for me. Mr. St. George sent the goods on to York, where he turned his business over to Messrs. J. Quesnel and Baldwin while he went back to France to visit his aged father.

For some time I had noticed a change in him, without, however, being able to assign the cause. One day I took it upon myself to ask him and he told me the secret. It seems he had been engaged to a young lady of Quebec but the marriage did not take place, owing to the interference of some people whom he had considered his devoted friends. It was this that decided him to take the voyage overseas in hopes of dissipating his profound sorrow. He wanted me to accompany him but I could not leave my

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mother, who was alone at the time. With keen regret I bade my good, kind friend Good-bye.

The following autumn I purchased a property at Boucherville and opened up a store, but my business did not equal my advance expectations and I decided to return to Amherstburg, a place I had determined never to see again. Accordingly, I once more set out for the West with my merchandise.

I reached Niagara in July, 1816, and there I found Mgr. Plessis en route for Sandwich with his suite. We took passage on the *Vermillion*, commanded by Captain Nelson, uncle of the Montreal Nelsons, and in spite of strong contrary winds landed at Amherstburg six days after leaving Niagara. I stayed there two months, selling as many of my goods as I could. I turned the remainder over to Maisonville and again left the place, this time, forever.

It was September when I returned to Boucherville and again engaged in trade; but I did not succeed and I gave it up, disposing of my goods in Montreal.

In the year 1819 I did what most men do, I got married. In thus changing my estate, however, I did not resign my citizenship, but remained a property holder in my native parish. But I have never gotten entirely

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over my longing for the western part of Upper Canada, where I passed so many momentous years of my life.

And here my little journal ends. I pray the reader who has patience enough to peruse it may be indulgent of my style and of all the faults he finds in it.

Boucherville, April 15, 1847
Thomas Verchères de Boucherville.

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The Capitulation

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THE
CAPITULATION,

OR

A HISTORY OF THE EXPEDITION CON-

DUCTED BY WILLIAM HULL,

BRIGADIER-GENERAL

OF THE

NORTH-WESTERN ARMY.



By an Ohio Volunteer,



*“ My business in this state, made me a Looker-on
here in Vienna, where I have seen corruption boil and
bubble, ’till it overrun the stew.”* Shakespeare.



CHILLICOTHE:

PRINTED BY JAMES BARNES.

1812.

Preface

IN presenting to the public eye, the unpolished narrative, of an obscure individual, an apology may be expected by those who are ignorant of the motives which induced him to publish it.

The author while in the state of Ohio, became a member of a company which soon afterwards engaged in actual service—and was consequently captured by the British on the 16th of August, when Fort Detroit was surrendered to general Brock.

On his return to this place, he was requested by some friends, to write a history of the campaign—he has done so. Many facts of importance he has probably omitted, because they were unknown to him; but should this brief outline meet with common approbation, he may be induced to enlarge it by additional facts and documents.

The author will not attempt at eclaircissement—neither will he offer any other plea than the following, for the manner in which he has written his history:

A young American having broken an appointment with doctor Franklin, came to him the following day and made a very hand-

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some apology for his absence: He was proceeding, when the doctor stopped him with, "my good friend, say no more, you have said too much already; for the man who is good at making an excuse, is seldom good at any thing else."

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IN the month of April, 1812, a requisition was made by the executive of the United States, for twelve hundred of the militia of the state of Ohio. In obedience to the call, Return Jonathan Meigs, governor and commander in chief of the militia of that state, issued orders to the major general's of the western and middle divisions, to furnish their respective quotas of men, who were to rendezvous at Dayton on the 29th of April.

The governor, on his part, found but little difficulty in convening the troops; for no sooner was it known, that the government was preparing for a necessary war, than the love of country, and the zeal for its interest, which the people of Ohio have ever manifested, was then more evidently evinced, by the voluntary tender of their services to the government of their choice.

In a few day's the requisition was more than complied with. Citizens, of the first respectability, were seen enrolling themselves, and preparing for the dangers of the field—contending with each other, who should be foremost to avenge his country's wrongs.

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Having elected their officers, and made the necessary arrangement of their affairs before their departure from home, and all that domestic felicity had rendered dear to them, they commenced their march and arrived at Dayton, before any previous preparations had been made for their comfortable reception.

Hurried, as they were, from various quarters of the state, they had to encounter many difficulties before they were prepared to meet them. Here they discovered that neither houses nor sheds were fitted up for their accommodation, and that they were to remain exposed to the inclemency of the season, until tents could arrive from Pittsburgh and Cincinnati: And many of them unacquainted with the fatigues of a campaign, had neglected to furnish themselves with blankets, which are articles most essential to the soldiers comfort. When inured to the field, and covered at night with this necessary companion, the weary veteran can

“Snore upon the flint

While resty sloth finds the down pillow
hard.”

The want of tents remained a serious inconvenience—but mostly did our volunteers lament the necessity which compelled them to become cooks, without having wherewith

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to prepare their provisions—Culinary utensils were at length procured, and the troops becoming more used to the indispensable duties of a soldier, were seen, sans ceremony, up to their elbows in a barken dough-trough, kneeding the bread which they had to eat, or diving with as little formality, into a camp-kettle of soup, after a dumpling, enriched by the flavor of a shin of beef.

By the middle of May, the troops were provided with blankets, tents, and other camp equipage, and had become tolerably expert in the most useful military evolutions.

Brigadier-General William Hull, who had been selected by government, to conduct the expedition, having arrived, the encampment was changed from the commonage at Dayton, to a Prairie on the western bank of Mad river,* about three miles from town.

* When the troops were crossing Mad river, on their march to camp Meigs, they were accompanied by capt. Abr'm F. Hull, the general's hopeful son, and aid-de-camp. Abraham was mounted on a spritely steed, in full uniform, and seemed to entertain high conceptions of his military appearance. At the beach he gave his horse the spur, and both were instantly in the middle of the stream. Here Abraham turned his head to the shore he had just left, and at the same moment his nag plunged him with violence into the river. He gained the shore, however, completely saturated. The troops on their march through the

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Governor Meigs, having done his duty, in convening the troops, and organizing them into regiments,* had only in obedience to the orders of the secretary at war, to surrender the command of them over to general Hull.

The twenty-fifth of May being agreed on as the day on which the army should change commanders, the brigade was formed into

wilderness, would occasionally remind each other of the circumstance and the antecedent cause, by crying out, "who got drunk and fell in Mad river"? To which a distant companion would answer "Captain Hull," and a third respond "that's true."¹

¹ Captain Abraham Hull expiated his father's faults and his own, if any, by dying a soldier's death at the crest of the height at Lundy's Lane, where British and American soldiers fought hand to hand, guided by the flashes of the guns, throughout the night of July 25, 1814. Here his remains still rest, in the beautiful churchyard which is the final home of many another hero, almost in the shadow of the little church which crowns the hill. The author's story reflects the distrust of regular army men and the dislike of army discipline which was practically universal among the Ohio militia levies.

* For the first regiment of Ohio Volunteers, Duncan M'Arthur was elected colonel, and James Denny and William A. Trimble, majors. For the second, James Finley was elected colonel, and Thomas Moore and Thomas B. Van Horn, majors. And for the third, Lewis Cass was elected colonel, and Robert Morrison and Jeremiah R. Munson, majors.

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a close column and the following address delivered by governor Meigs:²

OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE FIRST ARMY OF OHIO

Collected suddenly and rapidly from various parts of the state, you have manifested a zeal, worthy the character of a free people. You will soon be completely organized, and I trust that harmony will forever continue. Already you have made considerable advances in discipline: you will improve, it will soon become easy, familiar and agreeable. Subordination is the soul of discipline: order, safety, and victory are its results. Honour consists in an honorable discharge of duty, whatever may be the rank. Respect each other according to your stations.—*Officers*, be to your men as parents to children: *Men*, regard your officers as fathers. You will

² One of the chief horrors of war, as conducted a century and a half ago, consisted in the rivers of oratory to which the soldiers were subjected on every possible occasion. The speeches of Governor Meigs and General Hull, here presented, afford characteristic illustrations of this practice. At Monguagon, with the British regulars barely put to flight and with the wounded and dying as yet uncollected and uncared for, Colonel Miller drew up his little army in formal array to listen to his delivery of a stump speech, composed in the best Napoleonic tradition. For it, see *Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflet*, IV, 77.

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soon march. *My heart* will always be with you. The prayers of all good citizens will attend you.

By direction of the president of the United States, I have so far organized and marched you: in his name I thank you.

I feel a great satisfaction in knowing, that you are to be placed under the command and guidance of *Brigadier General Hull*, a distinguished officer, of revolutionary experience; who being superintendant of Indian Affairs, and *Chief Magistrate* of the territory to which you are destined, was happily selected for the service. His influence and authority there, will enable him to provide for your convenience.

I pray that each may so conduct, that when you return to the embraces of your friends and relations, they may be proud to salute you as one who had, honourably, belonged to the first army of Ohio.—The second army is organizing, and will follow if necessary.

Our frontiers must be protected from savage barbarity, our rights maintained; and our wrongs avenged.

Go then! fear not! be strong! quit yourselves like men, and may the GOD of armies be your shield and buckler.

R. J. MEIGS.

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In the delivery of this feeling and patriotic valedictory address, our governor spoke as he felt; for he considered the volunteers of Ohio as his brethren. After he had concluded; General Hull addressed the troops, submitted to his command, as follows:

PATRIOTIC OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE STATE OF OHIO

The manner in which his excellency, Governor Meigs, has delivered over to my command, this part of the army, has excited sensations which I strongly feel, but which it is difficult for me to express. His great exertions, and the talents he has displayed in assembling, organizing, disciplining, and preparing in every respect, for actual service, so respectable a military force, are known to you, and will be fully known to his country: this knowledge of his conduct will be his highest eulogium. Long may he live, and long may he adorn his elevated station.

The crisis now has arrived, when our country has deemed it necessary to call into the field her patriotic sons. The spirit which has been manifested on this occasion, is highly honourable to the officers and soldiers, who compose this army, and to the section of the union to which you belong. You have

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exhibited an example to the elder part of the country, worthy of imitation. Citizens, distinguished for talents and wealth, have made a voluntary tender of their services, to defend the violated rights of the nation.—Such men are entitled to the fair inheritance, which was purchased by the valour and blood of their fathers. A country with such a defence, has nothing to fear. In any possible exigence, it is environed with a bulwark of safety. To officers and soldiers who have engaged in the public service with such honourable and patriotic motives, it is unnecessary to urge the importance of regularity and discipline, or the necessity of subordination and obedience to orders. The same spirit which induced you voluntarily to engage in the service of your country, will animate you in the discharge of your duties. With patience you will submit to the privations and fatigues incident to a military life, and if you should be called to meet danger in the field, you will manifest the sincerity of your engagements by the firmness and bravery of your conduct. In marching through a wilderness, memorable for savage barbarity, you will remember the causes by which that barbarity has been heretofore excited. In viewing the ground stained with the blood of your fellow-citizens, it will be impossible

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to suppress the feelings of indignation. Passing by the ruins of a fortress,³ erected in our territory by a foreign nation, in times of profound peace, and for the express purpose of exciting the savages to hostility and supplying them with the means of conducting a barbarous war, must remind you of that system of oppression and injustice, which that nation has continually practised, and which the spirit of an indignant people can no longer endure. If it is impossible that time should obliterate the remembrance of past transactions, what will be the impressions on the present occasion? The wrongs of the same nation have been continually accumulating, and have at length compelled our country to put on the armour of safety, and be prepared to avenge the injuries which have been inflicted.

³ The allusion is to British Fort Miamis, erected on the Maumee a short distance above Toledo in 1794 and garrisoned until the general British evacuation of the Northwestern posts two years later. Since the occupation of Fort Miamis constituted a new encroachment upon territory conceded to America by the treaty of 1783, its erection was regarded by President Washington and other American leaders as a greater affront to American rights than the mere retention of the posts which had been in existence and British occupancy prior to 1783. The ruined earthworks of the fort, to which Hull alludes, are still to be seen.

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In a few days you will be joined by a body of troops of the United States' army. Among them, you will have the pleasure of seeing the fourth regiment of infantry, the gallant heroes of Tippecanoe.⁴ They will act by your sides, in your approaching campaign, and while they will be ambitious to maintain, and if possible, to encrease the glory they have already acquired, your conduct will be stimulated by the splendour of their example, and you will be inspired with ambition to acquire laurels, at least as brilliant as those they deservedly wear. That harmony and friendship may pervade this army, and that glory and fame may attend it in all its movements, are wishes, in which I am confident you will all heartily join.

WILLIAM HULL,
Brigadier-General, N. W. Army.

The arms which were deficient, having been repaired by the artificers, the regiments were ordered to "strike their tents

⁴ The Fourth U. S. Infantry had been brought from the Atlantic seaboard to Vincennes in 1811 to cope with the threatening situation precipitated by Tecumseh, and had constituted the chief reliance of Governor Harrison in his Tippecanoe campaign of the autumn of 1811. It was now being transferred to Ohio, where it comprised the sole regular unit in the army General Hull was organizing for his northward march to Detroit.

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and march away.”⁵ (*For order of march &c. see appendix A.*)

On the first of June we bid adieu to camp Meigs, and proceeded on to Staunton, a small town on the east bank of Miami, where we remained until the sixth of that month.*

At this place it was made known to the general, by major James Denny, that the guards were very remiss in the performance of their duty; that while going the grand and ordinary rounds, he had frequent occasion to waken those who had fallen asleep on their posts. To remedy this evil, an order was immediately issued by the general, to prevent the recurrence in future of such criminal neglect.

At our departure from Dayton, it was supposed that the river Miami was navigable,

⁵ This statement is much too optimistic. So miserable were the small arms supplied for the army that General Hull was compelled to organize traveling forges, by which the guns were repaired at the rate of 50 a day while the army was advancing northward. Even after the arrival of the army at Spring Wells on July 5, the armorers were still laboring at the task of repairing the arms. See Hull's order of July 6, 1812, *post*, 219.

* Capt. Abraham F. Hull, of the United States' additional army, and Robert Wallace, jun. were appointed aids-de-camp to brigadier-general Hull, and Lieut. Thomas S. Jesup, of the seventh regiment of U. S. infantry, Brigade major, and doctor Abraham Edwards,

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and that a considerable portion of our baggage could be conveyed in boats to Fort Loramie, but on learning here that the crafts which had attempted to bring on our stores, were stranded and could proceed no further, the troops received orders to march to Urbana, where we arrived on the seventh of June. (*See appendix B.*)

A council was held on the next day by general Hull and governor Meigs, with twelve Indian chiefs, who had come in for the purpose, by whom it was agreed to renew the treaty of Greenville. After smoaking the calumet of peace, both parties engaged to support the several articles of that treaty, calling on the Great Spirit to witness their sincerity. The Indians appeared honest in their professions of friendship, and without hesitation granted permission to general Hull, to march with his army through their territory, and to establish as many garrisons as he might deem requisite for his own and their protection.⁶ They also promised to to superintend the medical department of the Army, as hospital surgeon.

⁶ By the Treaty of Greenville, concluded by General Wayne in August, 1795, the cession to the whites of the southern and eastern portions of Ohio was made. The famous Greenville Treaty line ran eastward across central Ohio from Fort Recovery to Fort Laurens, thence down the Tuscarawas and Cuyahoga rivers to

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bestow on the army while on its march through the wilderness, all the assistance in their power, and to give the general all the information they could obtain, should other Indians meditate an attack.

The following are the proceedings of the council held by governor Meigs, two days previous to the arrival of the army.

PROCEEDINGS

Of a council begun and held near Urbana, Champaign county, Ohio, on Saturday the 6th of June, 1812, between his excellency *Return Jonathan Meigs*, esq. governor and commander in chief in and over the state of Ohio, and Ta-he, (or Crane, principal

Lake Erie at Cleveland. Northwestern Ohio, lying north of this line was still Indian country in 1812; hence the necessity of treating with the chiefs for permission to march an army through it, en route to Detroit. Not until September, 1817, was the area lying between the Greenville line and the Maumee River ceded to the United States. The necessity of conciliating the occupants of this area lay in the fact that between Urbana and Detroit almost 200 miles of wilderness intervened. To march an army across it, and sustain it afterwards on supplies brought from southern Ohio would be a difficult task, even if the Indian occupants of the country remained peaceful; if they should prove actually hostile it would be impossible, as the failure of all the efforts of George Rogers Clark and other rebel leaders to reach Detroit during the American Revolution abundantly proved.

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chief) Sha-na-to, Scutush, Man-na-ham, Dew-e-sew, (or Big River) chiefs of the Wyandots, Cut-a-we-pa-sa, (or Black Hoof,) Cut-a-we-pa, (or Lewis) Pi-a-ge-ha, Pi-ta-ha-ge, Kit-e-kish-e-mo, Na-sa-ha-co-the, chiefs of the Shawanoes, Ma-tha-me, (or civil John) of the Mingoes.

His excellency addressed the chiefs, as follows:

My red brothers, chiefs of the Wyandots, Shawanoes and Mingoes, I thank the Great Spirit, that he has permitted us to come together where we can talk freely and sincerely. As father of the people of Ohio, who live as neighbors to you, I speak.

Brothers—Ever since the treaty of Greenville, we have lived in peace, and fulfilled all the promises then made to you. We wish always to live in peace with you; it is because we love peace, and not because we fear war. The Wyandots, Shawanoes and Mingoes, are brave nations, and brave men will not break their promises.

Brothers—Our great father, the president of the United States, whose eyes equally regards all his children, desires that you should live as we live, to raise your provision, and provide for your families.

Brothers—Open your ears: listen to what I say; I speak from my heart.—Bad men and

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liars have endeavoured to break the chain of friendship. If you harken to the deceiver called the Prophet, and the mad man, Tecumseh, his brother, your skies will be cloudy, your paths will be dark, and you will tread on thorns. The pretended prophet has cheated some of the different tribes. He does not communicate with the Great Spirit; his counsels are foolish, and have stained the land with blood. The Great Spirit delights in seeing all his children live in peace, and smiles upon them, when they do so; but he frowned on the prophet at Tippecanoe, and his deluded followers were destroyed. *Beware, then.*

Brothers—Open your eyes. An army of my own children, of fifteen hundred men, under the command of general Hull, the father of the Michigan territory, is marching; but, brothers, be not alarmed, although his arm is strong, he will strike none but enemies.

Brothers—Listen to me attentively.—Your young men sometimes go rashly out of the true path, and do mischief, and go to war without your permission. You are their chiefs and they must obey you. You must restrain them, so that your wives and children may sleep in peace, and the innocent not suffer for the acts of the guilty.

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His excellency then addressed himself particularly to Ta-he, the principal chief of the Wyandots, and taking him by the hand continued:

My brother Ta-he—Twenty-one years ago I came from the Ohio to you at Sandusky, through the wilderness; you took me to your cabin; I was faint, and you refreshed me; I was hungry and you fed me,—I will now feed you, and will shew you the friendship which my people shewed your people last winter. After the battle of the Wabash, many hundreds of your men, women and children came among us, even to the banks of the great river to hunt. I sent messages to my children every where to treat your men, women, and children with kindness, and not to molest them, because I told them you had a right to come among us by the treaty of Greenville. Not one of all those who came among us was injured. They tarried all winter, and returned to their towns in safety; and by that treaty you must abide.

Brothers—I will not deceive you. The Great Spirit who shakes the earth wills that I tell you nothing but the truth. If you hold fast to the treaties you have made; the United States will hold them fast on their part; but the tomahawk must not be stained

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with the blood of my children; if it is, it shall be wrested from you, and sunk to the bottom of the great Lakes. If you join the enemies of the United States, there shall be no peace for you.

Brothers—I lay my hand on my heart and assure you, that if you are faithful, you shall be protected. It is promised, and it shall be fulfilled.

Brothers—You have listened to my voice, I will now listen to yours.

Ta-he, after three hours spent in private consultation with the chiefs of the different nations, spoke as follows:

Brother—We suppose that the great Spirit has ordered that we come together on this day. We have met to make known our friendship towards you. We thank the Great Spirit that so many of us have been able to come together at this time, and that we can talk one with another. The Great Spirit placed us here as brothers, and as we believe, requires that we live together as brothers ought to do. If we are willing to live in friendship with each other, he will permit us so to remain. I have heard often of our great father, the president of the United States. I have never seen him, but I hope that not only ourselves, but that he also will be of the same mind.

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Brother—Listen; we have come to talk with you. We have heard you, and we wish that you would hear us. I hope that not only you, but that our great father, the president of the United States, will also listen, as we expect that he will hear what we have to say at this time.

Brother—I have not much to say about the treaty of which you have been talking. I believe I remember, and have kept that treaty, and hope the Great Spirit will help me always to keep it. When our father gen. Wayne, and ourselves, made that treaty, we talked about it together; we then said that the treaty should never be broken, that we would always be at peace, that our women and children might remain at rest; we talked that we were old, and would not long stay here, but that we should teach our young men always to keep it. This is all I have to say brother, for myself.

Brother—We are only from a few nations who are here; but I will now speak to you for them. This (*handing his excellency a bit of white wampum*) is a token of peace. We have received it from the Great Spirit. It is clean and pure, and is unstained with the blood of any white man.

Brother—The eye of the Great Spirit is not only on all our actions, but sees our

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hearts. He did not place us here to quarrel, but to live in peace with one another. We ought so to talk and have his name in our hearts. We can only speak to you for ourselves; a number of my people are a great way off; those who are near me I speak for. Brother I wish you to understand me, we wish for peace. We will not listen to bad men and liars, and we pray the Great Spirit to shut our ears against them.

Brother—Here are the chiefs of the Wyandots, Shawanoes and Mingoes. We answer only for ourselves. We are all of one mind—we all wish for peace. Brother, we are not telling you any lies, and I hope that you and our great father, the president of the United States, will think so. The Great Spirit knows our hearts, and knows that we are sincere. We may deceive you but we cannot deceive him.—Brother, this is all I have to say. I hope our father general Hull, will soon be here; I wish to speak to him and to you together as brothers. I hope that he may succeed, and that if he should meet with any enemies he may overcome them.

BLACK HOOF THEN SPOKE

Brother—I shake hands with you in friendship. You have heard Ta-he. What he has said, we have to say. We are all as one.

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Father—I have got my instructions which I received from my great father, the president of the United States; I make them my study, and walk in the path which he pointed out, without turning to the right or to the left. It is the wish of me and of all my nation to be at peace with you, to be frugal and industrious, that we may provide for our women and children. I hope the Great Spirit will admit the white people and me and my people to shut their ears against liars and all bad men. I intended to keep the directions of our great father, the president, and all those who have authority under him. I look to you as one of my great fathers, who will point out the road in which I have to walk. From the place in which your people have placed you—from your standing among them—and from your grey hairs, I think you have wisdom to direct me, and I shall listen to what you say. I am glad you came here. I hope you will help us to be at peace, and take under your protection ourselves, our women and our children, as you do your white children, and do as you think best with them. Your red children are poor but their hearts are good. I am very happy to see our father and brothers. I am happy to shake hands with you, and you may rest assured they never shall be parted. The writ-

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ings and instructions I received from my great father the president, I carry with me when I go abroad, I have them when I remain at home, and when I sleep I lay them under my pillow. You have heard the Wyandots—you have heard me—I have heard you. I (*handing another white wampum*) give you this from my heart, as a token of peace. I have done. I thank you.

LEWIS THEN SPOKE

I have only a few words to say, father. I have heard something from you this day satisfactory to me. It appears that by the dispensations of Providence, we have met in peace at this time. I trust the Great Spirit is now looking down and will witness the sincerity of my heart in what I am going to say. It is true what Ta-he has said; and I also take my direction from the seventeen fires which are burning throughout this union, and from the president of the United States. I am but a stripling in comparison with my aged fathers who have spoke before me, but I can speak the sentiments of my own heart. When I went to my father, the president, and secretary of war, I received my instructions from them, and although the Heavens should fall asunder and the earth open beneath, I will not part with

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them, or wander from the path which they pointed out.

Father—I have heard what you have said, am glad in my heart. I shall take every means to prevent my men from disturbing the whites in any manner.—This is all I have to say, I have and will follow the instructions of my father, the president, the secretary of war, and of yourself.

Governor Meigs then told them gen. Hull would arrive the next day—he would then take their hands and place them in gen. Hull's, to which they assented. The council broke up.

Attest,

JASON CURTIS,
HENRY BACON,
Secretaries.

The fourth regiment of United States' infantry, which had so lately distinguished itself at Tippecanoe, having arrived on the 10th inst. within a few miles of our encampment—arrangements were made to receive them in a becoming manner. A triumphal arch being erected, adorned with an Eagle and the words "*Tippecanoe—Glory,*" the regiments of Ohio volunteers under the command of colonels M'Arthur, Cass and Findley, marched to a prairie about a mile from town, for the purpose of escorting them in.

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Having formed a line, these brave fellows emerged from a wood at a little distance, and appeared in our front, with col. Miller at their head. The customary salutations being exchanged, they were conducted through the triumphal arch into camp. (*See appendix C.*)

Nothing now remained to prevent the army from moving on to Detroit, and arrangements were accordingly made for the purpose. (*See appendix D.*)

On the eleventh of June, the regiment commanded by colonel M'Arthur was detached to cut the road as far on as the Scioto river. Having passed by Manary's block-house and Solomon's town, a small Indian village near the boundry line, we began our labours through an extensive wilderness of excellent level land.⁷

On the 16th we commenced building two block-houses, on the south bank of the Scioto river, each 20 by 24 feet, which were connected and strengthened by a strong stockade, and in honor of our meritorious colonel, we called the place "*Fort M'Arthur.*"⁸

⁷ Manary's Blockhouse, built by Captain James Manary's company of Ross County militia, was three miles north of Bellefontaine. Solomon's Town was a small Shawnee village, north of the Greenville line.

⁸ Fort McArthur was in the northwest corner of Buck Township, Hardin County, about three miles west of present-day Kenton. It consisted of a weak

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While these buildings were under way, a very unfortunate occurrence took place. Peter Vassar, an eccentric Frenchman, attached to capt. Lucas's company, having been on guard, and probably feeling sleepy or more probably intoxicated, laid himself down by a tree to rest; but being disturbed by noise, or "instigated by the Devil," he arose and seized a musket which was beside him, and having examined whether it was charged, deliberately took aim at Joseph England, a centinel then on post, and shot him through the left breast, about four inches above the heart. England was carried to his tent, and Vassar bound and confined until the other regiments would arrive, in order that the punishment due to such malignant licentiousness, should be awarded by a court martial. Mr. England, notwithstanding the dangerous wound he had so undeservedly received, recovered, and in a few weeks returned to Chillicothe.

To prevent the repetition of calamities of this kind, which too frequently occur while

stockade, enclosing one-half acre of ground with log blockhouses at the southeast and the northwest angles. They were about twenty feet square, with the upper story projecting about a foot beyond the one beneath. For further interesting details concerning the fort see *History of Hardin County, Ohio* (Chicago, 1883) 394-97.

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the mind is under the influence of inebriation, a regimental order was issued by the colonel, restraining the suttlers from selling liquors to non-commissioned officers and soldiers, who had not the written permission of their commanding officer.

On the evening of the 19th general Hull, with the residue of the army arrived, and encamped on the north side of the river, and on the 21st colonel Findley was ordered to proceed on, for the purpose of cutting the road to Blanchard's fork of the Auglaize.

On the next morning the army decamped, with the exception of a part of capt. Dill's company, which was left, at Fort M'Arthur, for the double purpose of protecting the sick and defending the fort, should it be invested.

A continual rain for a number of day's had tended to render the roads we had to travel (which were for many miles through a country, where creeks and rivers have their origin) uncommonly bad and almost impassible for our waggons.

In the mean while, the army progressed but slowly; the first day of our march was occupied in traveling about twelve miles, when we were forced to encamp on a miserable swampy piece of ground, where the mud was *anle* deep in our tents. Here a block

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house was erected and most appropriately named "Fort Necessity."⁹

In consequence of the baggage waggons not being able to keep pace with the army, and forage (from some cause) being so scarce, that the general, "from a sense of duty," was compelled to put the horses and oxen on short allowance; every man in camp who could make a *pack-saddle* was detailed for the purpose—the general having ordered the baggage to be conveyed on pack-horses. A sufficient number being made, the order was rescinded—the waggons proceeded on, and the pack saddles were deposited in Fort Necessity, for which purpose it was probably erected.

Shortly after the arrival of general Hull at Dayton, general Robert Lucas¹⁰ and Mr.

⁹ Near the southwest corner of Madison Township, Hancock County, about a mile southwest of the village of Williamstown and about three miles northwest of Dunkirk. See *History of Hardin County, Ohio*, 397-98 and *History of Hancock County, Ohio* (Chicago, 1886), 319-20.

¹⁰ Robert Lucas in subsequent years served both as Governor of Ohio and of Iowa Territory. He kept a journal of this campaign which has been published by the State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City, 1906), and which affords a valuable contemporary record of the operations of Hull's army. Lucas set out upon his mission to Detroit on May 25, and rejoined Hull at Camp Necessity on June 22.

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William Denny, were sent to Detroit with dispatches for Mr. Atwater,¹¹ then the acting governor of the Michigan territory. Gen. Lucas returned to our camp at Fort Necessity—and gave a very unfavorable report of the state of affairs in the territory. He was present at several councils held by Mr. Atwater, with the chiefs of the Wiandot, Attawa and Chippawa tribes, who expressed their intention to be friendly, except Walk-in-the-water, of the Wyandot nation, who declared that the American government was improperly interfering, by sending an army into the country which would stop their communication with Canada, and observed that the Indians were their own masters and would go where they pleased, and that the trouble which had taken place on the Wabash, was altogether the fault of governor Harrison.

From the best information gen. Lucas could obtain, it appeared evident, that the British had convened large bodies of Indians at Malden, who were supplied with arms and ammunition, and were ready to strike on our frontiers at the signal of the British.

¹¹Reuben Atwater (Attwater), Secretary of Michigan Territory, 1808-14, and acting governor during Governor Hull's absence, 1811-12. Atwater Street in Detroit is named in his honor.

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Fort Detroit, he represented as by no means prepared for defence, and that the American citizens were much pleased that an army was approaching for their defence.

General Lucas had no opportunity of visiting Fort Malden, but from information he had received at Detroit, believed that it was in a worse situation than the fort at the latter place. (*See appendix E.*)

The weather having assumed a more favorable appearance, the army marched, and in three days arrived at Fort Findley, which stands on a handsome eminence on the west side of Blanchard's fork.¹²

On the 26th instant, the day previous to our leaving this place, colonel Dunlap, arrived express from Chillicothe, with dispatches from the secretary at war to general Hull, which, although they were confidential, were supposed to contain official intelligence of the declaration of War. Indeed it was believed by every one, that war had been declared, as the general had ordered all the heavy camp equipage to be left at Fort Findley, and determined to commence a forced march.

¹² On the site of present-day Findlay, Ohio. The fort was built by Colonel Findlay's regiment of Ohio militia, sent in advance by Hull to open the road and establish the fort.

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Having stationed the balance of capt. Dill's company at Fort Findley, and detached col. Cass' regiment to cut the remainder of the road to the Rapids, the army proceeded on, (but not with more than usual celerity) and in a few days encamped on the bank of the Miami of the Lake, opposite the battle ground of general Wayne, and in view of a little town at the foot of the rapids.¹³

This is the most beautiful and romantic country we had seen on our journey. Here a beam of joy animated every countenance, and gave fresh energy and fortitude to those who had underwent with difficulty, the severity and fatigues of a march, at once gloomy and oppressive. On men who had just emerged from a dreary wilderness, unincumbered by a solitary hut, reared by the hand of civilization—unoccupied by naught

¹³ The "town" was the old French (subsequently British) trading settlement at the foot of the Maumee Rapids. General Wayne in 1794 thoroughly razed the houses and other property of the inhabitants. In the years following the American occupation of the Northwest, American settlers gradually established themselves at the old French trading center, so that by 1812 a considerable number were living here, under the jurisdiction of the government of Michigan Territory. Following Hull's surrender, they fled in panic haste to points of refuge within the American frontier.

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but beasts of prey and unrelenting savages, the change of scenery had an effect too happy for description.

The army continued here about one day, then crossed the river and marched in order through the town. We encamped that night on the "pasture ground" adjacent to the ruins of the British Fort Miami.

At this place a small schooner,¹⁴ owned by capt. Chapin was engaged to carry a quantity of baggage, belonging to the army to Detroit. About 30 officers and privates were put on board, to whose protection it was intrusted. Previous to the sailing of the vessel (it being the last of the month) complete muster rolls of every company in the brigade, were made out and deposited in a trunk and put on board the schooner.

Lieut. Robert Davidson, of col. Cass' regiment and twenty-five men, were left at this place to build a block-house; and an open boat was sent in company with capt. Chapin, with the sick attached to the army.

On the first of July (after the general had made arrangements, which shall be noticed in course) the army recommenced its march, and that night encamped on a large prairie. The next day our march was principally

¹⁴ This was the *Cuyahoga*, whose seizure at Amherstburg by Lieutenant Rolette has been described *ante*, 77-78.

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through a beautiful country, interspersed with French settlements. At the first of these settlements, a party of twenty-five Indians, of the Tawa tribe, came to us with a white flag. Like the Indians at Urbana, they professed friendship, and solicited permission to march with the army. Among these natives of the wilderness were four old squaws, the most hideous animals that the votaries of Vulcan have ever crowned with the emblems of ugliness. To describe the physiognomy of each, would be a task for Job, indeed! One particularly attracted my attention. She was low of stature and remarkably corpulent. The numberless wrinkles on her broad bloated face, were presumptive proofs that an hundred winters at least had past by without shattering her frame. Her large black eyes, scarcely divided by a nose, the massy sides of which extended or rather rested on her cheeks and eclipsed the intervening carbuncles, could hardly be considered as fellows—with one she looked the general full in the face, and with the other reviewed the army. Around her neck, innumerable rows of beads were strung to which was attached a silver cross, suspended between a pair of breasts, wrinkled with age and lengthened by their weight. In short, if the witch of Endor was such a

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squaw as this, no wonder she could "call spirits from the vasty deep!"

At the river Raisins, information was received that the vessel which had attempted to pass by Malden, with our baggage, &c. was taken by the British, and the crew and passengers made prisoners. We were also informed that the enemy had previously received the declaration of war.

It is a fact, worthy of remark, that the first intimation we had from gen. Hull, of the existence of war, was subsequent to the capture of the schooner.

The evening before we arrived at the river Raisins, the colonels of each regiment communicated to their men, that the general had received official information of the declaration of war against Great Britain, and that it was expected every man would be anxious to do his duty—that the important situation of the army required them to declare to the troops the absolute necessity of strict subordination, and that as the crisis had now arrived, when justice had declared, that reparation for past indemnities was to be sought for at the point of the bayonet, firm and determined bravery was essentially requisite to insure victory and honor to our arms. Each man was then supplied with ten rounds of cartridge and an extra flint.

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The conduct of our volunteer field officers, on this occasion was dignified, and well calculated to

Fire the untutored soul with hopes of fame,
And bid him spurn existence for a name—
To tempt the deedless warrior or to dare,
With untried sword the terrors of the war;
Thus with the *fathers acts*, the soul inspire,
And teach the son to emulate the sire;
Each daring thought, each generous spark to fan,
Check every fear that would the soul unman;
With kindling rage bid his fierce bosom glow,
And turn with bursting vengeance on the foe.”

On the morning of the fourth of July, we arrived at the river Huron, 21 miles from Detroit. From reports which we had heard we were induced to expect an attack from the Indians at this place. The line of battle was formed immediately on our arrival, while the pioneers were engaged in throwing a bridge across the river. We continued under arms the whole day, and had an attack been made, it would have proved destructive to the enemy—for never did men pray more ardently for an opportunity to distinguish themselves, than did the army of Ohio on that memorable day. At this place we could distinctly hear the firing of artillery at Detroit. We had also a distant view of the Queen Charlotte, on her way to Malden with

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troops. During the whole of that night, one half of the troops were under arms.

On the next morning we marched at an hour unusually early, and arrived at the Spring Wells, where we encamped. This place commands the town of Sandwich, which is immediately opposite, and is well calculated for defence—it is the best scite for a fortress we had seen in the territory.

The following order which was issued the day after our arrival, will serve to shew the method which gen. Hull took to notify the posts therein mentioned of the declaration of war.

Head-Quarters, at Spring-Wells,
July 6, 1812.

GENERAL ORDERS

Brigadier general Hull presents his thanks, and he likewise considers it his duty to present the thanks of the country to the officers and soldiers of this army, for the firm and persevering spirit they have manifested in their march from Vincennes and the river Ohio, to this place; the obstructions of nature have been removed by their persevering industry and their march has been almost as rapid, as if those obstructions had not existed. They have proved by their conduct the sincerity of their engagements.

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The commanding officer of the militia of this territory, will make a return to the brigade major of the volunteers and all the militia now in service, distinguishing the different discriptions.

The garrisons Detroit, Michilimackinack, Chicago and Fort Wayne, being placed by the president of the United States, under the command of brigadier general Hull, the commanding officers of those garrisons are informed, that congress has declared war against Great Britain, and they will immediately place their garrisons in the best possible state of defence, and make a return to brigade-major Jesup, at Detroit, of the quantity of provisions the contractor has on hand at their respective posts, the number of officers and men, ordinance and military stores of every kind, and the public property of all kinds. The springs of water, near this encampment, will be dug out in a manner best to supply the army, and vaults will be sunk under the direction of the quarter-master general. The armorers under capt. Tharp will attend solely, for the present, to repairing of the arms. By command of brigadier-general Hull.

THOMAS S. JESUP, *Major of Brigade.*

On the morning of the 6th of July, col. Cass, was dispatched with a flag of truce to

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Malden, which was commanded at that time by lieut. col. St. George. The object of his mission was to demand the surrender of the baggage and prisoners taken from the vessel which they had captured on her passage to Detroit.

On the arrival of colonel Cass at Malden, he was blindfolded; the object of his mission failed, and he returned to camp, accompanied by capt. Burbanks of the British army.

It is a matter of astonishment, that colonel Cass, should have permitted the general, on that occasion, to trifle with his rank. There is not a precedent in the history of military diplomacy, that will sanction the conduct of general Hull, in making a superior officer the bearer of a flag of truce to an inferior one—and although the courtesy of col. Cass, may have induced him to submit to the indignity, it can never palliate the insult given him by his commander. The honor of a soldier is as sacred as his existence.

On the 7th, five pieces of artillery were brought from Detroit and placed on the bank in front of our encampment, in a situation to annoy the enemy at Sandwich. On the same day general Hull held a council with the principal chiefs of the Wyandot, Shawana, Senaca, Pottowatomie and Mohalk

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nations—which terminated in their professing to be our friends.

From the situation of the encampment it was thought adviseable to remove it; as it was in the power of the British, to bombard us from the upper side of Sandwich. On the eighth, the whole army encamped in the rear of the city of Detroit.

The city of Detroit, is handsomely situated on the western bank of the strait of St. Clair. It contains about 150 houses and 700 inhabitants. The fort, which stands in the rear of the town, was 'originally a compact square work with demi-bastions, on the angles and casemates; with the exterior order of a regular fortification to accommodate 250 men. The position was, however, chosen without skill, the foot of the scarp being more than 200 rods from the river, and the town actually between the river and the fort!¹⁵ The works are earth

¹⁵ The author's comments disclose his complete ignorance of the situation which was responsible for the building of the fort. The old French town was built on a moderate elevation close to the river, and was a stockaded fortification, entirely adequate for defense against Indian attack, as the famous siege of 1763 sufficiently discloses. Across the little Savoyard River, however, in the vicinity of present-day Fort Street, was a somewhat higher elevation whose occupancy by a white army equipped with artillery would render the

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with a double stockade or line of pickets.' It lies 725 miles N. W. by W. from Philadelphia, N. latitude 42 40. West longitude 82 56.

Before we leave Detroit, it will be necessary to give a succinct sketch of the geographical limits, &c. of the territory of which the city of Detroit is considered the capital—for which I am partially indebted to the intelligent pen of Augustus B. Woodward, esq.¹⁶

The boundary commences at the southern extremity of lake Michigan, and is drawn east from that point until it shall intersect lake Erie. This line has never been actually

old fort and town untenable. Upon the news of Clark's capture of Vincennes in 1779, coupled with the expectation that he would soon lead a rebel army to Detroit, the new fort (Lernoult) was built on the height across the Savoyard to anticipate its occupancy by Clark. Fort Lernoult was never intended, therefore, to control the river, but rather to protect the river-front fortification against attack by a land army equipped with artillery.

¹⁶ The brilliant and erratic judge of Michigan Territory from 1805 to 1824, designer of the modern city-plan of Detroit following the fire of 1805, and of the University of Michigan with sixty-three departments of learning at a time when the entire Territory contained less than 10,000 white inhabitants. Woodward Avenue, Detroit's principal street, is named in his honor.

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run.¹⁷ It is therefore uncertain where it would intersect lake Erie—A minute of an observation taken by a British gentleman makes the latitude of the southern extremity of lake Michigan a degree and a half south of Detroit. This would carry the line entirely south of lake Erie. Many oral communications represent the southern extremity of lake Michigan as nearly west of Detroit. The American government has been taking measures to remove this ambiguity. These however, may have been impeded by the troubles which have recently prevailed those regions. During the incertitude the mouth of the river Miami has been assumed as the line.

The boundary was common to Great Britain and the United States, on the east, and to the north.

From the southern extremity of lake Michigan a line was required to run through the middle of said lake to its northern extremity.

¹⁷ The author here alludes to the notable dispute over the location of the Michigan-Ohio boundary which eventually provoked the Toledo War of 1835 and produced the unique situation of the State of Michigan existing and functioning for a year and a half before being admitted by Congress to the Union. In general, the author's remarks reflect the degree of geographical ignorance of the region which prevailed as late as 1812.

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It is uncertain whether the northern extremity of lake Michigan is in Green Bay, or at the intermediate point between Green Bay and the strait of Michilimackinack.

From the northern extremity of lake Michigan, a line due north to the northern boundary of the United States, in lake Superiour, completes the western demarcation, and closes the geographical limits of the country. Its greatest length may be five hundred miles, its greatest breadth three hundred. It includes two peninsulas; one very large the other small.¹⁸

From the mouth of the river Miami to the head of the river St. Clair at the embouchiere, or outlet of lake Huron, the country is settled through in a very sparse manner, on a continued line without any settlements in the rear, every house forming as it were a double frontier. There were formerly some families at the river St. Joseph's near the southern extremity of lake Michigan, and

¹⁸ Originally, Michigan Territory, whose boundaries the author here describes, included the Lower Michigan Peninsula and that portion of the Upper Peninsula which lies east of a line drawn north and south through the Straits of Mackinac. Following the admission of Illinois in 1818, present-day Wisconsin and north-eastern Minnesota were joined to Michigan, while for a short time (1834-36) Iowa, Minnesota, and the eastern half of both Dakotas were added.

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the island of Michilimackinack had also a few settlements.

The population of the territory of Michigan, according to the last census, was 4,762 souls, of which about 1000 are of the military age. The inhabitants are generally descendants of the old French settlers. The Roman Catholic is the predominant religion.

Every possible diligence was used from the day we encamped at Detroit, until the 12th, inst. in preparing for the intended invasion of Canada. The artificers were constantly engaged in repairing our arms, and mounting part of the ordnance on carriages. The most patriotic exertions were used by the colonels of regiments and commandants of companies, to impress upon the minds of the troops the necessity of strict obedience to orders; they painted in prospective, the glory which the brave man is alone entitled to, and exhibited in the catching language of sincerity, the necessity which compelled the first army to become the invaders of Canada. A small part of one company only, refused to cross the river.

The night of the 10th was appointed to make the attempt; but we were prevented by the licentious conduct of a few of the men, who kept constantly firing off their peices. Major Munson of colonel Cass' regi-

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ment, was severely wounded, by one of those unnecessary discharges.

On the next evening, colonel M'Arthur marched with his regiment to the Spring-Wells, for the purpose of decoying the enemy—a few boats accompanied the detachment, and the noise which was made led the British to believe that we intended to land below Sandwich. The manoeuvre had the desired effect—the enemy supposing that we would make an immediate attack on Malden, (as we certainly ought to have done) drew all their forces towards that post.

On the next morning (July 12th) the army marched about a mile above Detroit, to the foot of Hog Island, and the boats being in readiness, the regiments, commanded by colonels Miller and Cass embarked and in 15 minutes effected a landing without opposition.*¹⁹

* Gen. Hull was among the last to embark—As the boat, on board of which he was, touched the Canadian shore, he was heard to exclaim,—“The critical moment draws near!”

¹⁹ “Above” Detroit means eastward along the river road running toward Lake St. Clair. Hog Island was present-day Belle Isle. At its lower end stands the lovely Scott Fountain, while close to the point on the opposite shore where the American army landed is the plant of the Ford Motor Company of Canada.

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The American flag was immediately unfurled and the huzzas of the van were instantly re-echoed by the rear and the American citizens of Detroit. The residue of the army crossed over as soon as possible, and formed an encampment at the farm of col. Bawbee, (a British officer) opposite to Detroit. The American flag was hoisted on a lofty pole, in front of a brick house which the general occupied as his quarters.²⁰

The following address²¹ to the inhabitants of Canada was issued by the general, and distributed by his orders.

By WILLIAM HULL,
Brigadier general and commander of the north-western army of the United States

A PROCLAMATION

Inhabitants of Canada! after thirty years of peace and prosperity, the United States

²⁰ The Baby house which was utilized by Hull for his headquarters during his 3½ weeks stay in Canada is still standing close to the business center of Windsor. A movement to utilize it as the home of a local historical museum is now (1940) being agitated.

²¹ This address gave great offense to the British authorities, although the appeal to the Canadians, designed to win their acquiescence in an invasion seems for a short time to have had some effect upon them. The threat to extend no quarter to British soldiers fighting in alliance with Indians was particularly re-

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have been driven to arms. The injuries and aggressions, the insults and indignities of Great Britain have once more left them no alternative but manly resistance or unconditional submission. The army under my command, has invaded your country, and the standard of the Union now waves over the territory of Canada. To the peaceable unoffending inhabitant it brings neither danger nor difficulty. I come to find enemies, not to make them. I come to protect, not to injure you.

Separated by an immense ocean, and an extensive wilderness from Great Britain, you have no participation in her councils, no interest in her conduct—you have felt her tyranny, you have seen her injustice; but I do not ask you to avenge the one, or to redress the other. The United States are sufficiently powerful to afford every security consistent with their rights and your expectations. I tender you the invaluable blessings of civil, political and religious liberty, and their necessary result, individual and general prosperity.—That liberty which gave decision to our counsels, and energy to our

sented. General Brock issued a counter proclamation (printed in Richardson, *War of 1812*, 17-19) on July 22, in which stern retaliation for any infliction of Hull's announced policy toward the enemy was threatened.

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conduct in a struggle for independence, and which conducted us safely and triumphantly through the stormy period of the revolution. That liberty, which has raised us to an elevated rank among the nations of the world; and which afforded us a greater measure of peace and security, of wealth and improvement, than ever fell to the lot of any people.

In the name of my country, and by the authority of my government, I promise you protection to your persons, property and rights; remain at your homes; pursue your peaceful and customary avocations, raise not your hands against your brethren.—Many of your fathers fought for the freedom and independence we now enjoy. Being children therefore of the same family with us, and heirs to the same heritage, the arrival of an army of friends must be hailed by you with a cordial welcome. You will be emancipated from tyranny and oppression, and restored to the dignified station of freemen. Had I any doubt of eventual success, I might ask your assistance, but I do not. I come prepared for every contingency—I have *a force which will look down all opposition, and that force is but the van-guard of a much greater!* If, contrary to your own interests and the just expectations of my country you should take part in the approaching contest,

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you will be considered and treated as enemies, and the horrors and calamities of war will stalk before you. If the barbarous and savage policy of Great Britain be pursued, and the savages are let loose to murder our citizens and butcher our women and children, this war will be a war of extermination. The first stroke of the tomahawk—the first attempt with the scalping knife will be the signal of one indiscriminate scene of desolation. No white man found fighting by the side of an Indian will be taken prisoner; instant destruction will be his lot. If the dictates of reason, duty, justice and humanity, cannot prevent the employment of a force which respects no rights, and knows no wrong, it will be prevented by a severe and relentless system of retaliation. I doubt not your courage and firmness—I will not doubt your attachment to liberty. If you tender your services voluntarily, they will be accepted readily.—The United States offer you peace liberty and security—your choice lies between these and war—slavery and destruction. Choose then, but choose wisely, and may he who knows the justice of our cause, and who holds in his hand the fate of nations, guide you to a result the most compatible with your rights and interests.

WILLIAM HULL.

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By the general,

A. F. HULL, *capt. of the 13th U. S.* }
regt. of infantry and aid-de-camp. }

Head-Quarters, Sandwich, July 12th, 1812.

It was truly astonishing to observe the effect which the landing of our troops had upon the affrighted Canadians. Had an army of Cannibals invaded their country, they could not have manifested stronger symptoms of consternation. In fact, many of the ignorant old women, afterwards, acknowledged that they were taught to believe we would *eat* them—and in order to avoid so horrible a death, fled to the woods for safety—accompanied by their husbands and their children. So much worse than savages did they consider us, that almost every house was evacuated for miles along the Canadian shore. But on receiving the general's proclamation, many of them were induced to return to their homes and their accustomed avocations.

This part of Upper Canada, is very handsomely situated, and in a high state of cultivation. The country for seventy miles up, is as level as a prairie—covered with farms, and in some places with a thick growth of timber. The houses are generally built of wood, and have mostly an antique appearance.

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The province of Upper Canada, is in length, from east to west, about 1090 miles —its greatest breadth from lake Erie, to the northern line is 525 miles; the average breadth is not more than 250 or 300.

Upper Canada, says Morse, is bounded north by New Britain, N.E. by Lower Canada, E. by the same and by the river St. Lawrence, Lake Ontario and Niagara river, which divide it from New York; South by Lakes Erie, Huron and Superior, and Winnepec river, which divide it from New-York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan territory and the N. W. parts of the United States, W. by Detroit river, lake St. Clair, Huron river and lake, Winnepec river and lake Winnepec. Like all the other British provinces, Upper Canada has a lieut. Governor, who acts in the absence of the governor general.

This province is divided into 19 counties, which are subdivided into townships. The number of inhabitants in 1806, was 80,000. They are composed chiefly of emigrants from New-England and New-Jersey. Some of the settlers are from Great Britain.

The militia in the several districts meet annually. All the males except the Friends, Tunkers and Mennonists, from 16 to 45, bear arms.

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The country is generally level and in many parts little elevated above the Lakes. In the northern parts of the province is the Canada range of mountains, which branch from the Rocky mountain range near the head of Columbia river, and preserves an irregular course to the eastern shore of Labrador.

Our camp presented the form of a hollow square. On the 14th a breast work was thrown up at every side, except that bounded by the river, which was defended by artillery.

On the 13th, a detachment of about forty men, commanded by Capt. Henry Ulry, marched towards Malden. At Turkey Creek bridge, about nine miles from the encampment, the party discovered where 200 Indians had been in ambush the preceeding night, for the purpose of cutting off such detached portion of our troops as might attempt to cross the bridge, which they had partly broken up, and afterwards planted themselves in positions calculated to annoy a superior force with great effect. Captain Ulry received from a Canadian farmer who lived near the bridge, information that considerable bodies of Indians were in the neighborhood, and believing that it would be extremely imprudent to risk a fight with a force which was represented as infinitely

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superior to his, thought it prudent to return to camp, and make report to the general.

This night an alarm was sounded. We were told that the British and Indians were without the pickets, and intended to attack the army. The alarm was soon found to be predicated on error.

A detachment from capt. Sloan's company of cavalry was sent up the river, on the 14th to reconnoitre. About eight o'clock in the evening, two of the party returned to camp with information, that they had heard of a body of Indians which had moved up the river a short time before sunset. Col. M'Arthur was immediately ordered to march in pursuit of them with 100 men from his own regiment, and a rifle corps from col. Findley's. At half past nine, he marched with his detachment, without provisions or blankets—previous to which, however, the whole of the detached cavalry returned to camp—and were ordered to accompany col. M'Arthur in his excursion. After marching about eight miles the detachment halted, about an hour before day, in an apple orchard, near the upper extremity of the Sandwich settlement.

At the dawn of day we recommenced our march, expecting to overtake the Indians in the first woods. At about 10 o'clock, capt.

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Robinson and his company, fell in the rear of the detachment, and as soon as col. M'Arthur and the men belonging to his regiment had advanced a few hundred yards, that company returned to camp.

The detachment proceeded on to Bell river, about 20 miles from Sandwich, where the col. purchased a beef, and some flour and whiskey for his men. After continuing here about an hour, to prepare our provisions, we resumed our march to the river Ruskin, where we discovered that the Indians we were in pursuit of, had just left their camp at the mouth of that river, and proceeded up in three canoes. The colonel and a few dragoons pursued them with all possible speed, followed by a detachment of infantry.

On observing col. M'Arthur and his party approach, an old French woman and her son, who resided some distance up the Ruskin, ran to the Indians and apprised them of their danger—upon which they fled to the woods for safety—but before they were one hundred yards from their canoes they were fired on by the colonel and those foremost in the pursuit. The woods through which the Indians made their escape was covered with logs and thickly interwoven with bushes; which prevented the mounted men from coming up with them. A squaw and

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three papooses who were unable to keep pace with the pursued, were taken by the colonel. Through the medium of an interpreter he informed her that he had not come to make war on women and children, and that if the Indians would stay at home and attend to their peaceable concerns they would be protected. He then left the squaw and her defenceless progeny in possession of all her property, except a few horses, which the Indians had left at their camp.

At this place capt. Smith, of the Detroit dragoons, and a few of his men overtook the detachment. The other horsemen were then ordered on to the river La Tranche (or Thames) to procure provisions.²²

We now proceeded on to the mouth of the river Tranche, and encamped opposite the house of Mr. *Isaac Hull, brother to the general*, at which place, a corporal and six British militia were stationed as a guard to the family of Mr. Hull.²³ This guard col.

²² The Thames. The detachment marched eastward from Sandwich to Lake St. Clair and along its southern shore to the mouth of the Thames, and up that stream to present-day Chatham. The River Thames settlement, which was thus raided, was chiefly an outgrowth of the parent settlement at Detroit.

²³ Isaac Hull, younger brother of General William Hull, was born at Derby, Conn., in 1760. About the year 1804 he migrated to Upper Canada, where he was

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M'Arthur disarmed and sent to their respective homes.

The next morning the detachment marched up the river about four miles to a Mr. Trudel's where the colonel again purchased a beef and some bread. Here we were joined by the dragoons, who were sent in advance the preceeding evening.

Having breakfasted, we marched on to capt Jacobs'—but before we arrived there, capt Smith who had went in front with his command, held a council with some Indians, which he concluded before we reached him. At Patterson's we found a considerable quantity of flour—and at capt. Jacob's some flour and considerable of military stores—a flag staff which stood in capt. Jacobs' yard we cut down and took a stand of British colours.²⁴

living when the War of 1812 began. Refusing to take an oath of allegiance to the British government, he was imprisoned for a time; the narrator's statement about the guard of militia may refer to this difficulty. Hull later removed to Maumee City, Ohio, and still later to Monroe, Mich., where he died in 1829. See *The Hull Family in America*, 494.

²⁴ George Jacob, following the American Revolution, was a partner in trade at Detroit of Daniel McKillip (for whom see *ante*, 131). The partnership of Jacob and McKillip did not prosper, and was eventually dissolved. McKillip settled near Colchester, Ontario, and from here went to his death in August, 1794, fighting in the

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We continued our march up to M'Cune's²⁵ and Dolson's, where we found a considerable quantity of flour, whiskey and salt. In Mathew Dolson's stable, we discovered four bales of three point blankets of a very excellent quality, 100 in each bale—also a roll of cloth. At M'Gregor's mill²⁶ we found a large sail boat, which we loaded with flour.

On the morning of the 16th, the detachment returned down the river, taking with it all the boats and canoes which could be had, and loaded them at the different houses where we had discovered provisions and munitions of war.

Indian ranks against General Wayne in the battle of Fallen Timbers. Jacob removed to River Thames, where he was living in 1812 and serving as a captain of dragoons in the Kent County militia. He died Dec. 27, 1833 and his grave may still be seen in beautiful St. John Churchyard, Sandwich.

²⁵ Thomas McCrae, a Detroit tailor during and subsequent to the American Revolution. He was a loyalist, who desired to remain a British subject, and who accordingly removed to River Thames, where he was living in 1812.

²⁶ McGregor's Mill, kept by John McGregor, a former resident of British Detroit, was on McGregor's Creek, within the limits of present-day Chatham. To this point the Thames is navigable by lake vessels of considerable size, and in 1813 General Harrison's army, pursuing General Procter, was attended thus far by some of the vessels of Commodore Perry's fleet.

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The colonel and dragoons encamped on the night of the 16th, on the south side of the river La Tranche opposite Mr. Hull's—and major Denny descended lake St. Clair by night with his fleet of boats.

Thus, the detachment under col. M'Arthur penetrated near 70 miles into the province, and returned in safety to camp on the evening of the 17th of July, after having taken a great number of boats—near 200 barrels of flour—400 blankets—a number of guns, and a considerable quantity of amunition and other military stores. The colonel having receipted for every article, the same as if it had been private property. We left the people our *warm friends*.

This tour of 130 miles was performed in four days and on four meals of provisions, which were purchased by col. M'Arthur, and paid for out of his own private funds, and for which I believe he has as yet received but little or no compensation.

Probably there is no portion of Upper Canada, more beautiful or more prolific, than that bordering on the river Tranche, and that part of lake St. Clair immediately adjacent. The fields of wheat and Indian corn had a most charming effect; but as every male subject capable of bearing arms,

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had been drafted, vast quantities of wheat remained ungathered.

Deserters from Malden, were now crouding in, and obtaining protections from the general. Many of whom were known to return the moment after they had received protection, with information to the enemy of the situation of our camp, the operations of the army, and such other information as might advance the interest of the British, and retard our own.

On the 16th, col. Cass and lieut. col. Miller, marched with a detachment to the bridge over the river Aux Canards. The subjoined letter of col. Cass, to gen. Hull, will explain the object, and supercede the necessity of any other statement of that affair.

Sandwich, Upper Canada, July 17, 1812.

SIR—In conformity with your instructions, I proceeded with a detachment of 280 men, to reconnoitre the enemy's advanced posts. We found them in possession of a bridge over the river Canards, at the distance of four miles from Malden. After examining their position, I left one company of riflemen, to conceal themselves near the bridge, and upon our appearance on the opposite side of the river, to commence firing, in order to divert their attention, and

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to throw them into confusion. I then proceeded with the remainder of the force about five miles, to a ford over the Canards and down on the southern bank of the river. About sun set we arrived within sight of the enemy. Being entirely destitute of guides, we marched too near the bank of the river, and found our progress checked by a creek, which was then impassable. We were then compelled to march up a mile, in order to effect a passage over the creek. This gave the enemy time to make their arrangements, and prepare for their defence. On coming down the creek we found them formed; they commenced a distant fire of musketry. The riflemen of the detachment, were formed upon the wings, and the two companies of infantry in the centre. The men moved on with great spirit and alacrity. After the first discharge the British retreated—we continued advancing. Three times they formed, and as often retreated. We drove them above half a mile, when it became so dark that we were obliged to relinquish the pursuit. Two privates in the 41st regiment were wounded and taken prisoners. We learn from deserters, that nine or ten were wounded, and some killed.²⁷ We could gain

²⁷ This slight engagement marks the first actual bloodshed of the War of 1812.

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no precise information of the number opposed to us. It consisted of a considerable detachment from the 41st regiment, some militia, and a body of Indians. The guard at the bridge consisted of 50 men. Our riflemen stationed on this side the Canards, discovered the enemy reinforcing them during the whole afternoon. There is no doubt but their number considerably exceeded ours. Lieut. col. Miller, conducted in the most spirited and able manner. I have every reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the whole detachment.

Very respectfully, sir, I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

LEWIS CASS,
Col. 3d reg. O. Vol.

His excellency brig. gen. Hull.

A British soldier who was killed, and afterwards buried by the detachment, was taken up by the Indians and scalped. This trophy was taken to Malden and presented to the commandant; who paid the Indians their premium, believing that it was actually the scalp of an American drummer. Great feasting and rejoicing took place upon the occasion, in which the British officers cheerfully participated. It was soon discovered, however, that the Indians had deceived their

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masters; that they had *only* scalped an *Englishman* and found an *American* drum.²⁸

In addition to the above, it is only necessary to observe that captain Brown of the 4th regiment, took a flag of truce to Malden, contrary to the orders of col. Cass. On his return to the detachment he was fired at by the enemy.*

On the morning of the 17th, a reinforcement arrived, consisting of the residue of the fourth U. S. regiment, and a piece of artillery, under the direction of Lieut. Eastman.

A council of officers was soon after convened, a majority of whom insisted on evacuating the bridge. Col. Cass and capt. Snelling were anxious to maintain the post which had so easily been gained, and which appeared to them of the first importance; but they were over-ruled by the rest of the officers. The whole of the detachment then returned to camp.

²⁸ This incident affords a characteristic illustration of wartime atrocity stories. For the British account of the affair, see *ante*, 81.

* I have never been able to discover the object which capt. Brown had in view, in thus taking to Malden, a flag of truce. It is said he was the bearer of private letters to the prisoners at Amherstburgh—one thing is certain—it was not to demand the surrender of the fort. (See Hull's letter to Brock, dated Aug. 15th, 1812).

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The bridge, which was thus abandoned, was the chief obstruction between the encampment and Malden, and it was obvious, that the possession of it was paving the way to an easy conquest of that fort—but it will be recollected that col. Cass had no orders to make a stand at the bridge, either prior or subsequent to its surrender. He was detached to "*reconnoitre the enemy's advance posts*"—not to hold the ground he might conquer.

This evening (17th) a report was prevalent in camp, that the Queen Charlotte, a British armed vessel, was sailing up the strait, demolishing the houses, and impressing the inhabitants as she proceeded; and that the British had again possessed themselves of the bridge over the Aux-Canards. In consequence of which col. Findley took command of a small detachment and marched to the bridge, which he found torn up, and defended by the enemy, who had erected a breast work of timber on the southern side. The Queen Charlotte was also moored in a favorable situation to defend it. Col. Findley returned the 18th, and on the evening of that day capt. Snelling, capt. Mansfield and part of capt. Sloan's troop of horse went to the bridge as a corps of observation.

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From the tenor of the following order, it appears that gen. Hull, at one time wished the troops to believe that he intended to make a descent upon Malden, and that such officers and soldiers, as had unfortunately lost their cloathing by the capture of capt. Chapin's schooner, should have the pleasure of wearing the second handed apparel of his majesty's subjects—as soon as the orders of the government would be known on the subject.

Head-Quarters, Sandwich, July 18th, 1812.

GENERAL ORDERS

Whereas the private property, consisting principally of necessary cloathing of the officers and soldiers of this army, has been seized by the British force, and is detained at Malden, or its dependencies, notwithstanding application has been made for a restitution of it. In order to remunerate those officers and soldiers who have suffered, the general *directs* that all *personal property of officers now serving in the British army at the aforesaid post, shall be taken* under special orders from the general, and delivered to the Quarter-Master General for safe keeping, until the orders of the government are known on the subject.

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One hundred and fifty men properly officered will be detached for command tomorrow morning at 5 o'clock from col. M'Arthur's regiment. Col. M'Arthur will command and will call at Head-Quarter's for his instructions.

WM. HULL,
Brigadier-Gen. Commanding.

Such an order as the above, never before disgraced the character of an army, or emanated from the mind of a general. It was telling the troops in the plainest language to strip the linen of an enemies back and place it on our own. It evinces the dwarfishness of soul, and want of foresight, which afterwards appeared so conspicuous in all the movements of gen. Hull. But to return to the routine of operations.

On the 19th, col. M'Arthur was ordered to the river Aux-Canards, with a detachment of 150 men from his own regiment, to relieve capt. Snelling and the troops who were sent down the day before. Col. M'Arthur found capt. Snelling at the lower end of the *Petit-cote* settlement, which is about a mile above the Aux Canards bridge. From this place to the bridge, three fourths of a mile, or something more, is a beautiful plain or dry prairie, lightly covered over with short

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grass. Within 300 yards of the bridge there is a small bank, or gradual elevation of about six or seven feet. On the top of this bank on the west side of the road, there is about three or four acres covered with short oak and hazel bushes, in which brushy ground there are two or three oak trees, and several stumps and logs. From the foot of this bank to the river Canards, is a low prairie somewhat wet and covered with long grass. The river Canards is about twenty-five or thirty yards wide, and very deep and muddy. The timbered woods on the south or lower side of the river, is from sixty to an hundred yards from its margin, and the woods appear very brushy. Colonel M'Arthur's orders from the general were, not to attempt to cross the river Aux-Canards, nor go within the reach of the guns of the Queen Charlotte, which lay at anchor in the Detroit river, opposite the mouth of the Canards, where a gun boat was cruising about her. The General stated that the object he had in sending down Colonel M'Arthur was to examine the situation of the bridge and the position of the Queen Charlotte. The Colonel formed his detachment in line of battle, along the fence, at the lower end of the Petit-cote settlement, and left it under the command of Captain John Lucas, and

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advanced with Adjutant Puthuff and a few riflemen to the brushy ground on the top of the bank, to reconnoitre. It was discovered that the bridge was all taken up but the sleepers, and that a battery was erected at the south end of it, about which, and in the adjacent woods, there appeared to be about fifty Indians, twenty-five dragoons, sixty regulars, and one hundred and fifty Canadian militia. The riflemen commenced a fire on the enemy at their battery, there being some of the Indians standing on it. Soon after the firing commenced, three of the Indians crossed the river on the sleepers of the bridge and ran up the road about forty yards and discharged their guns at our men—one of the Indians, (Marpot) in turning about, received a ball in the neck, which brought him full length to the ground where he lay for several minutes, but at length rose and staggered off until he was met by one of his companions who took him by the arm and assisted him back to the battery. This firing lasted about forty-five minutes, during which time Colonel M'Arthur and Adjutant Puthuff proceeded down the Aux-Canards towards the Charlotte to view her with a spy glass. Whilst in this act they were fired on by the gun boat, which had slipped up along the shore, among the rushes

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—the ball passed within three feet of the adjutant's head. The Colonel then returned to the riflemen who were left near the bridge and ordered them back to the main detachment. After some consultation with his officers respecting the propriety of returning to camp, he again went down near the bridge, in company with Doctor M'Adow, to re-examine the position of the enemy with his glass. He found that the Indians had principally left the bridge: about one hundred yards from where he stood was the small thicket of bushes, above mentioned, in which about thirty Indians were concealed; whilst others were seen passing towards the road, in the rear of the main detachment. On this information being received, Adjutant Put-huff rode with haste to inform the Colonel. At the moment the Adjutant was making his communication to the colonel, the Indians who were concealed in the bushes fired on them, but without effect.

The officers of the detachment were at the same time issuing rations of whiskey to the men according to the previous orders of the colonel. They heard the guns and saw the Indians firing on their colonel; and both men and officers ran to meet him—he with the assistance of the Adjutant, gen. Lucas, and col. M'Donald, soon formed the line of

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battle, and without halting, drove the Indians across the river. The colonel advanced with his men in line of battle, but would not suffer one of them to fire a gun, until they were within less than 150 yards of the Indians, who stood their ground and kept a continual fire on our line, until the word was given for our men to fire upon them—the Indians then broke and never stopped retreating until they crossed the river on the sleepers of the bridge and arrived at their battery. Our men continually advanced, and as constantly fired at the enemy, until the left wing was stopped by the river. As soon as we advanced near the river the whole force of the enemy fired on us from the woods. Some times our colonel would order a retreat for the purpose of drawing the Indians from their ambuscade, and as soon as they advanced to the river, we were ordered to turn on them, and never failed to drive them back.

The firing was however, badly directed on both sides, the enemies fire passed continually over us, and no doubt ours over him—notwithstanding the many cautions given the men by the col. and other officers during the action.

We had but two men wounded—the colonel's horse was shot in the forehead, during the action.

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After returning in the evening nearly up to the lower end of the Petit cote or French settlement, Gen. Tecumseh and a party of his warriors were seen in the rear, occasionally firing at our line. The colonel ordered a halt; then instantly commanded his men to face to the right about and fire at the word. All the Indians fell flat on the ground, except gen. Tecumseh, who stood firm on his limbs, without any apparent concern. The colonel was about to order another discharge on those straggling Indians, when he was informed that many of the men had been borrowing cartridges from their companions, and that the ammunition was almost exhausted, and was also reminded of the Indians who were seen passing towards the road in the rear of the detachment. It was then thought proper to return towards camp.

After resting a few minutes we marched up the road—An express was sent to camp, in the mean time with information, that the detachment under col. M'Arthur, had expended all its ammunition. Col. Cass who was always on the alert, and perhaps more particularly so when col. M'Arthur was out of camp on command, immediately rushed down the road with 150 of his men, accompanied by lieut. Edger of the artillery, and a six pounder. Col. Cass and col. M'Arthur

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met about sunset, a little above Turkey creek bridge, where col. M'Arthur expected to be attacked by the Indians, who were said to have passed towards the road between him and camp. Colonel M'Arthur immediately returned with col. Cass to the Petit-cote settlement, where it was said the Indians were committing depredations on the French. This however, they discovered not to be the fact; but that a party of them had been up to Bontee's wind mill,²⁹ and had drawn bread, as had been their custom. It being late cols. M'Arthur and Cass encamped for the night, and next morning the colonels with maj. T. and gen. Lucas, who came down with col. Cass, proceeded near to the bridge at the Aux Canards, where they discovered that the enemy's force was considerably augmented, and that some pieces of artillery was at the battery.

Col. M'Arthur was unwilling to fatigue his men by renewing an engagement with the enemy—but at the request of col. Cass and maj. Trimble, he again marched with his detachment towards the bridge; where we were soon assailed by the enemy's artillery—which was answered by a few discharges from our six pounder. Finding it impossible to operate successfully on the enemy, we

²⁹ Capt. Bondy, for whom see *ante*, 139.

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returned to camp, much fatigued and reduced by hunger, having been two days on short allowance.*

As Tecumseh was conspicuous in this engagement, and has since been appointed a brigadier general of the savage British army, a brief description of him will not be uninteresting.

Tecumseh is about 45 years of age, of the Shawanoe tribe, six feet high, well proportioned for his height, of erect and lofty deportment, penetrating eye, rather stern in his visage; artful; insidious in preparing enterprizes and bold in their execution—His eloquence is nervous, concise and impressive. In his youth, and before the treaty of Greenville, he was of the boldest warriors who infested the Ohio river—seizing boats—killing emigrants—loading the horses he took with the most valuable plunder—and retiring to the Wabash, where, careless of wealth himself—he soon lavished the treasures of his rapine upon his followers, which, when exhausted, he replenished by fresh

* One of the Ohio volunteers who had his musket choked while in the heat of the engagement, sat down between the fires & with his tomahawk knocked off the bands which connected the barrel and the stock together, and then unbreached his peice; having refitted her, he resumed his station in the ranks and afterwards fired several rounds at the enemy.

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depredations. Among the Indians, Tecumseh is esteemed the boldest warrior of the west.

There was certainly something misterious in thus sending detachments to the bridge, with strict orders not to cross it. To contend for a post without having the power to take possession of it, in the event of its reduction, is an evidence either of consummate vanity or unparelled treachery—and when we recollect that this bridge and battery were the greatest impediments in our course to Malden—that we had once possession of it, and that we were ordered to evacuate it, we are involuntarily forced to believe that it was never the intention of gen. Hull, to lead his army before the battlements of Malden.

On the 21st the general crossed over to Detroit, where he continued until the 26th, during which time the command of the army devolved on col. M'Arthur.

The rangers, or spies under capt. M'Culloch, were ordered to examine whether a back road to Malden could be made, so as to avoid the bridge. They returned on the 23d, and reported to the commandant, that they had explored the country between Sandwich and the river Aux Canards and discovered, that it would be impossible to make

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a road which would be passable for artillery or waggons.

It was reported in camp that a considerable body of Indians, were lurking about the country in the neighborhood of the Aux Canards bridge. Upon receiving this information, major Denny was ordered out with a detachment of 117 men, consisting of three corps under captains Lucas, Pinney and Rose. The following is the letter of instructions given by the commandant to major Denny.

Head Quarters, Sandwich, July 24, 1812.
Major Denny,

SIR—You will proceed with the detachment under your command, to some convenient place on this side of the river Aux-Canards, where you will place your men in ambush, near some road or trace where you expect the Indians to pass. I think it would be well to divide them into two parties, and suffer the Indians, or enemy, to pass the first unmolested, (unless the opportunity of taking them should be very good,) and let the second party commence the fire on them, and the first prevent their retreat: however, in this case you will use your own judgment. You will also fix on your ambuscade, where you may think proper, but be careful not to

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expose yourself and men in a situation where you cannot retreat, in case the enemy's force should be superior to yours.

I think it probable that there are some pieces of artillery stationed near the bridge, and that it would not be safe to approach it in day light; yet, it might, perhaps, be possible to approach so near that place, in the night, by a spy or two, as to know whether the enemy has an advanced picket in the small thicket on the right of the road, near the bridge.

DUNCAN M'ARTHUR,
Col. Com.

Major Denny marched with his detachment in the night of the 24th, to the Petit-cote settlement, where he halted about three o'clock the next morning, in a wheat field, three fourths of a mile from the bridge over the Aux Canards. Here we had a temporary repose, for near an hour, when the major who had been on the alert during the whole night, came round the men and roused them to their arms. He had heard a boat on the river, and believing that the enemy had landed a body of troops in our rear, formed the line of battle oblongly with the fence. We observed the boat descending the river with about twenty-five British soldiers on

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board, but at too great a distance for our shot to reach them.

About sun rise we quit the wheat field and formed an ambuscado, in a neighbouring orchard—while in this position, the guards observed a Frenchman and his two sons approach—who stated that they had came to reap their harvest. The Frenchman pretending not to understand our language, the major had recourse to an interpreter, when we soon discovered that his name was Bontee, and that he was a captain of a company of Canadians, in actual service at Malden—that he had came from the bridge in the disguise of a farmer, to observe our situation and our force and then to report accordingly to the enemy.

He was considered as a spy and sent without delay to camp under guard.

After marching and counter-marching until near the middle of the day, within view of the enemy's advanced post, we halted, for the purpose of resting, under a convenient shade, where we continued until two o'clock—At this time a party of Indians were seen marching within fifteen yards of us—more than half of our men were asleep! The Major observed the enemy, and a number of the detachment being prepared—he cried out, "*Rush like Hell, boys, and fire well.*"—The

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order was promptly obeyed, and seven of the savages fell on the spot.—The remainder of them were pursued by about twenty of the detachment for half a mile, when we were ordered to return to the main body, who, by this time had been roused from their lethargy by the thunder of arms.

The enemy, by this time, had rallied and augmented considerably—they were seen on horseback and on foot, hurrying towards Turkey creek bridge, which we had to cross on our way to camp, for the purpose of intercepting us, by placing us between their fire and that of a party of British who joined in the pursuit.

We were now formed in order of battle, and marched to a point of woods, on our right flank, which place the enemy was also making for: This position, which appeared of primary importance, we were unable to gain; for as we approached it, we received a heavy discharge from the enemy, which was returned by the right wing of the detachment with spirit, but the left gave way and fell off from the right, and from the enemy.—This, unfortunately, gave alarm to those on the right, who supposing they were part of the enemy believed themselves completely surrounded; and observing at the same, that the Indians were endeavoring to out-flank

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us, the only alternative was to gain the road by which we had to return.

We were pursued through fields of wheat and swampy thickets of prickly ash, for three miles before we were able to reach the road or lane—here the Major again endeavored to rally and form his men; but not more than forty were to be found who appeared willing to encounter an enemy which appeared to have every possible advantage, both in numbers and position.

Within half a mile of Turkey creek, the firing ceased—and after having crossed it we were met by Gen. Lucas and part of a rifle company which had heard of the engagement, and had come to our assistance. We had six killed, and two wounded, one of whom was taken prisoner—about fifteen of the enemy, we understood were killed, most of whom were afterwards found by the Canadians, in the woods and the adjacent wheat fields.

Captain M'Culloch, of the spies, scalped an Indian whom he killed in this engagement.—This was the first scalp taken from the enemy.

After the return of Major Denny to camp, reports very unfavorable to his character, as an officer, were every where in circulation.—The Major knew that he had done

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every thing in his power to prevent the disorderly conduct of that portion of the detachment, which tended so eminently to create confusion and dismay—and without hesitation requested a court of enquiry, which acquitted him with honor. It is a fact, that even those who reprobated the conduct of Major Denny, previous to the sitting of the court of enquiry, gave testimony, when under oath, pointedly in his favor. The following are the orders issued on the occasion:

Sandwich, July 25th, 1812.

BRIGADE ORDERS

In consequence of certain reports injurious to the honor and reputation of maj. James Denny of col. M'Arthur's regiment of Ohio Volunteers, having been circulated through the camp, by some person or persons unknown—a court of enquiry to consist of three members, is hereby appointed at the particular request of major Denny, to examine and enquire into the nature of said report, and the causes which have given rise to them.

Col. Findley is appointed president and col. Cass and major Vanhorn members—Adjutant Puthuff will act as recorder—the court will meet at the brick house in the

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centre of the encampment at ten o'clock
P. M. of this day.

(Signed) DUNCAN M'ARTHUR,
Col. Com.

Sandwich, July 30th, 1812.

GENERAL ORDERS

The court of inquiry, of which col. Findley is president, having reported to the general the testimony which has been before them respecting the conduct of major Denny, of col. M'Arthur's regiment of Ohio Volunteers, as commanding officer of a detachment of about one hundred and seventeen men, which advanced near the river Aux-Canards, on the morning of the 25th and was attacked by the enemy and compelled to retreat. The general, after having carefully examined the testimony with all the circumstances attending the expedition, is of opinion that major Denny conducted like a prudent and brave officer, and that no imputation rests upon *him*, in consequence of the retreat of the detachment. The court of inquiry of which col. Findley is president is dissolved.

(Signed) W. HULL,
Brig. Gen. Commanding.
(A copy from record.) W. H. PUTHUFF,
Adjutant and recorder of the court.

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The news of the unpropitious surrender of Michillimackinac, which took place on the 17th, reached us about the 28th, and put a period to our offensive operations in the province—if we except the building of a fortification, about a half a mile below our encampment which was at once unskilful in its construction, and disadvantageous in its situation.³⁰

The fall of Michillimackinac, was certainly an event deeply to be deplored; but when we bear in mind, that due exertions were not made by gen. Hull, to prepare that fort for defence, by giving the commandant information of the declaration of war, otherwise than by a general order, issued and circulated at Detroit and Spring-wells only, we must with one accord attribute the disaster to that inactivity and want of zeal, which were leading traits in the character of gen. Hull.

As the surrender of that fort, if we may believe gen. Hull, let open “the northern hive of Indians,” and tended to produce the surrender of Detroit, the history of its fall necessary comes within the precincts of our narrative. The following copy of a letter with the subjoined paper, addressed by

³⁰ This outpost, within the limits of present-day Windsor, was known as Fort Gowie.

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lieut. Hanks to gen. Hull on that important event, will preclude any other statement which might be offered.

Detroit, 4th August, 1812.

SIR—I take the earliest opportunity to acquaint your excellency of the surrender of the garrison of Michillimackinac, under my command, to his Britannic majesty's forces under the command of Captain Charles Roberts, on the 17th ult.—the particulars of which are, as follows:—

On the 16th, I was informed by the Indian interpreter, that he had discovered from an Indian that the several nations of Indians then at St. Joseph, (a British garrison, distant forty miles) intended to make an immediate attack on Michillimackinac. I was inclined, from the coolness I had discovered in some of the principal chiefs of the Ottawa and Chippawa nations, who had but a few days before professed the greatest of friendship for the United States, to place confidence in this report. I immediately called a meeting of the American gentlemen at that time on the Island, in which it was thought proper to dispatch a confidential person to St. Joseph to watch the motions of the Indians. Capt. Daurman, of the militia, was thought the most suitable for this service. He embarked about sunset,

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and met the British forces within ten or fifteen miles of the Island, by whom he was made prisoner and put on his parole of honor. He was landed on the Island at day break, with positive directions to give me no intelligence whatever. He was also instructed to take the inhabitants of the village indiscriminately to a place on the west side of the island, where their persons and property should be protected by a British guard; but should they go to the fort, they would be subject to a general massacre by the savages, which would be inevitable if the garrison fired a gun. This information I received from doctor Day, who was passing through the village when every person was flying for refuge to the enemy. Immediately on being informed of the approach of the enemy, I placed ammunition &c. in the block-houses; ordered every gun charged, and made every preparation for action. About 9 o'clock I could discover that the enemy were in possession of the heights that commanded the fort, and, one piece of their artillery directed to the most defenceless part of the garrison. The Indians at this time were to be seen in great numbers in the edge of the woods. At half past 11 o'clock, the enemy sent in a flag of truce, demanding a surrender of the Fort and Island to his Britannic majesty's

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forces. This, sir, was the first information I had of the declaration of war; I, however, had anticipated it, and was as well prepared to meet such an event as I possibly could have been with the force under my command, amounting to fifty seven effective men, including officers. Three American gentlemen, who were prisoners, were permitted to accompany the flag: from them I ascertained the strength of the enemy to be from nine hundred to one thousand strong, consisting of regular troops, Canadians and savages; that they had two pieces of artillery, and were provided with ladders and ropes for the purpose of scaling the works if necessary. After I had obtained this information, I consulted my officers and also the American gentlemen present, who were very intelligent men; the result of which was, that it was impossible for the garrison to hold out against such a superior force. In this opinion I fully concurred, from conviction that it was the only measure that could prevent a general massacre. The fort and garrison were accordingly surrendered.

“The enclosed papers exhibit copies of the correspondence between the officer commanding the British forces and myself, and of the articles of capitulation. This subject involved questions of a peculiar nature; and

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I hope, sir, that my demands and protests will meet the approbation of my government. I cannot allow this opportunity to escape without expressing my obligation to doctor Day for the service he rendered me in conducting this correspondence.

“In consequence of this unfortunate affair, I beg leave, sir, to demand that a court of enquiry may be ordered to investigate all the facts connected with it; and I do further request, that the court may be speedily directed to express their opinion on the merits of the case.

I have the honor to be, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

P. HANKS,³¹

Lieutenant of Artillery.

³¹ Lieutenant Porter Hanks received his first army commission, Jan. 17, 1805. In November, 1806, he was proceeding to Chicago with a detachment of troops, aboard the schooner *Tracy*, destined for that place, when in Lake Huron the captain of the vessel abandoned the voyage and returned to Detroit. The failure to continue proved fateful for Lieutenant Hanks, for during the enforced detention at Detroit he met, and within two months married, Margaret McNiff. In 1811 Captain Howard, commandant at Mackinac, died, and Hanks, his subordinate, assumed command of the post. It thus fell to his lot to surrender Mackinac to Captain Roberts, July 17, 1812. Paroled and allowed to proceed to Detroit, Hanks was undergoing court-martial on August 16 for the surrender of Mackinac when a cannon

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His Excellency, Gen. HULL,
Commanding the N. W. Army."

"P. S. The following particulars relative to the British force were obtained after the capitulation, from a source that admits of no doubt:

<i>Regular troops</i>	46	<i>(including 4 officers)</i>
<i>Canadian militia</i>	260	
<i>Total</i>	<u>306</u>	

SAVAGES

<i>Sioux</i>	56
<i>Winnebagoes</i>	48
<i>Tallesawains</i>	39
<i>Chippawas and Ottawas</i>	<u>572</u>
	715 <i>Savages.</i>
	<u>306</u> <i>Whites.</i>
	1021

"It may also be remarked, that one hundred and fifty Chippewas and Ottawas joined the British two days after the capitulation.

P. H."

ball fired from the British battery across the river, entered the room and killed him instantly. His widow died Dec. 14, 1869, aged eighty-three years.

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"Heights above Michillimackinac,

"17th July, 1812.

"CAPITULATION

"Agreed upon between Captain Charles Roberts, commanding his Britannic majesty's forces on the one part, and Lieutenant Porter Hanks, commanding the forces of the United States, on the other part.

"1st. The fort of Michillimackinac shall immediately be surrendered to the British forces.

"2d. The garrison shall march out with the honors of war, lay down their arms, and become prisoners of war; and shall be sent to the United States of America by his Britannic majesty, not to serve this war, until regularly exchanged: and for the due performance of this article, the officers pledge their word and honor.

"3d. All the merchant vessels in the harbor, with their cargoes, shall be in possession of their respective owners.

"4th. Private property shall be held sacred as far as it is in my power.

"5th. All citizens of the U. States, who shall not take the oath of allegiance to his Britannic majesty, shall depart with their

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property from the island in one month from the date hereof.

Signed CHARLES ROBERTS.

Capt. commanding the forces of his Britannic majesty.

P. HANKS,
Lieut. commanding the United States troops."

"Supplement to the articles of Capitulation signed on the 17th July:

"The captains and crews of the vessels Erie, and Freegoodwill, shall be included under the second article, not to serve until regularly exchanged, for which the officers shall pledge their word and honor.

Fort Michillimackinac,

"17th July, 1812.

CHARLES ROBERTS.

Capt. commanding the forces of his Britannic majesty.

GRANTED, P. HANKS,
Lieut. commanding the United States forces.

In the mean while, information arrived by express from Chillicothe, that capt. Henry Brush with a company of volunteers, was approaching Detroit with provisions for the army. It was now well known, that our communication with the states was partially

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excluded; in consequence of which, together with the solicitude they felt for the patriotic escort to the provisions, the colonels of Ohio volunteers, made repeated endeavors to obtain from the general, a sufficient force to meet and convoy capt. Brush and the provisions in safety to Detroit, but all their exertions were unavailing. The general was inexorable and appeared totally indifferent either about the arrival of the provisions, or the safety of the convoy.

At length, however, he consented to send out, for that purpose, and as an escort to the mail about 180 men, under major Van Horne, who was directed to join capt. Brush at the river Raisins.

Major Van Horne, crossed the river with his detachment on the fourth of August, and marched that night to the river *d'Corce*, where the men were ordered to form an ambuscade in the bushes, and to rest on their arms until morning.

About the dawn of day the detachment resumed its march preceded by four of the spies, and passed through the village of Maguaga, and from thence to the *Big-Appletree*, where some Indian traces branch from the road to the right and left of a corn field—unfortunately for capt. M'Culloch, he took the left trace accompanied only by

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a black servant of major Van Horne's, and was proceeding round the field, when about 12 or 14 Indians who were in ambush fired at and killed him on the spot, and then scalped and tomahalked him.

Thus fell M'Culloch, the intrepid and patriotic captain of the spies, while in the faithful discharge of his duty. His loss was severely felt by the army, for he was the brightest ornament of valour. His body was conveyed by his friend and companion, gen. Lucas, to a house at Maguaga, where covered with bark, it remained uninterred.

Shortly after this transaction, a number of mounted militia, and several gentlemen who wished to pass on to the river Raisins, joined the detachment. Major Van Horne was here informed by a Frenchman, that three or four hundred Indians and some British were near Brownstown in ambush, for the purpose of intercepting the detachment, but we had been so much accustomed to hear false statements from these deceptious people, that little confidence was placed in the report by major Van Horne.

The detachment now marched on in the following order. The front guard consisting of 24 men was divided into two columns, each preceded by three dragoons. The main body nearly in the same order. Capt.

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Rupe's, capt. Spencer's and capt. Robinson's companies formed the right, and capt. Barrere's, capt. Ulry's and capt. Gilchrist's the left column, & capt. Boersler's company the rear guard. The columns marching, where the ground would admit of it, one hundred yards apart—and the mail with an escort of horsemen in the centre.

In this manner the detachment advanced, near to Brownstown, where the road passes through a narrow prairie, surrounded on the right by a miry creek, which is only fordable at one place for a considerable distance up, the opposite side of which is thickly covered with bushes—on the left were a considerable number of small Indian corn fields, and thickets of bushes. Through this defile the detachment had to march and consequently the columns to incline within 40 yards of each other. While in this situation, the Indians who were concealed in the bushes on the opposite side of the creek, and on the left, commenced a heavy fire upon the detachment, which was at the onset principally directed at those who were on horse back.

The fire soon became general on both sides; but the major finding the enemy's force, to be superior, and that the Indians were endeavoring to surround him—prudently ordered a retreat, which was per-

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formed in as good order as the situation of the troops would admit of and supported by halting every favorable opportunity and firing upon the enemy.

Fortunately for major Vanhorne, a small portion of his detachment which behaved in rather a cowardly manner, by precipitantly retreating, prevented a party of British and Indians, who were detached for that purpose, from cutting off his retreat.

The enemy continued the pursuit for four miles—major Vanhorne retreated to the river *d'Corce*, where he procured a canoe, and sent the wounded to camp by water.—In this action we lost seventeen men killed, and several wounded. Among the killed were captains M'Colloch, Ulry, Gilchrist, and Boersler, lieut. Pentz, and ensign Robey.

When we reflect on the circumstance of this detachment being attacked nearly eighteen miles from Detroit by a superior force, its escape must be considered as providential, and its loss, but comparatively small. And when we review the advantageous positions occupied by the enemy, and the honorable, correct and brave deportment of major Van Horne, we can at least say that he done all in his power to make good the retreat of his detachment, after he found it impossible to fight the enemy to advantage,

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and that, at least he merits the meed of national gratitude.

The loss of the enemy, from every information which we could afterwards procure, was at least equal to ours. The great loss of officers on our side, must be ascribed to their exertions in stimulating, by example, their men to acts of heroism. They have died in the field of fame and their country remembers their services with gratitude.³²

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest
With all their country's wishes blest—
When *Spring*, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.
By fairy hand's their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung:
There Honor comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And *Freedom* shall a while repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there.

³² It may be doubted whether in all the scores of volumes that have been published about this disastrous war a more illuminating commentary upon the shameful record of the American armies than this one has been penned. Almost 200 American soldiers are sent upon a definite mission, on whose performance the continued existence of the army depends. They are waylaid and driven in panic rout by two dozen savages, fleeing so promptly that many of them do not once discharge their guns. Yet the author, writing for popular acclaim a few weeks afterward, finds ground for admiration in

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On the 6th, the general was earnestly solicited by the colonels, to grant permission to either of them to lead a detachment before Brownstown, sufficient to bury the dead, and force open the communication to the river Raisins, where it was understood Captain Brush was with the provisions. For these purposes five hundred men were required, but the general refused, in positive terms, to permit more than one hundred men to go on the expedition, which number being deemed inefficient for such a hazardous enterprise, the project was abandoned and the colonels left their misguided general with disgust.

A council was convened on the same day, at the general's quarters, consisting of the field officers and Capt. Dyson and Lt. J. Eastman, of the artillerists, when it was agreed by all, except the two latter, to make an immediate descent on Malden: In consequence of which, the following was circulated among the troops:

Sandwich, 7th August, 1812.

Doctor Edwards will take charge of the medical and surgical departments until fur-

the very celerity of their flight, and awards "the meed of national gratitude" to the leader who led them into ambush. In such a state of fatuous innocence did America in 1812 embark upon a life and death conflict with the most warlike nation on earth.

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ther orders, and will immediately make every preparation for the army to take the field against the enemy. All the tents and baggage of the army, not necessary, will be immediately transported to Detroit. The boats not necessary for the movement of the army will be sent to Detroit. An officer and twenty-five *convalescents* will be left at the fort at Gowies, with a boat sufficient to carry them across the river if necessary. All the artillery, not taken by the army, will be sent immediately to Detroit. The army will take seven days provisions; three days provisions will be drawn from to-morrow morning, and will be cooked, and the residue will be taken in waggons. Pork will be drawn for the meat part of the rations, one hundred axes, fifty spades and twenty pick-axes will be taken by the army, and a raft of timber and plank, suitable for bridges will be prepared and floated down with the batteries. Six long canoes will attend the floating batteries. Only one days whiskey will be drawn each day, and twelve barrels will be taken in waggons; all the artificers, and all men on any kind of extra duty, will immediately join their regiment.

Signed,

W. HULL,
Brig. Gen. commanding.

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The gloom which had hitherto pervaded almost every countenance, was now quickly exchanged for effulgent joy—Even the tenants of hospitals, quit the bed of disease, and seized their arms—the wounded leaped at the idea that they would soon have an opportunity of avenging their wrongs, and besought the surgeons to report them fit for duty. In short, every man was engaged either in cooking or repairing his arms—When, to our astonishment, we were ordered to *strike our tents and cross over to Detroit!*—To encamp in the rear of the fort, and to give up every pretention of a hostile nature.—Great God! what were our feelings now? A territory which we had invaded without opposition, we quit with disgrace. The laurels we had hoped to reap before the ramparts of Malden, were left ungathered—and we were doomed to bear the agonizing burden of dishonor.

The fort which was erected at Gowies was ordered to be garrisoned by one hundred and thirty *convalescents* under the command of major Denny. The following is a copy of his instructions:

Sandwich, August 8, 1812.

MAJOR DENNY,

You will take command of the stockade work at Gowies—the detachment consists

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of one hundred and thirty non-commissioned officers and privates, with the addition of lieutenant Anderson's corps of artillerists.

The object of your command is, to hold possession of this part of Upper Canada, and afford all possible protection, to the well disposed inhabitants—you will defend your post to the last extremity, against musketry—if cannon should be brought against it, and the state of the army at Detroit should be such, that no relief can be afforded to the post, and the enemy should be so powerful, that you cannot dislodge them by your cannon and musketry in the fort, or by a sally out of it, you will be authorised to retreat, for which purpose boats will be provided, and you will keep them in constant readiness—you will complete the stockade as soon as possible, and put it in the best state of defence—you will not suffer your men, on any account to straggle from the fort, or do any injury to the inhabitants. Confiding in your discretion, and good conduct, I am satisfied you will defend your post, in a manner, honorable to yourself and your country.

W. HULL,

Brig. Gen. commanding.

I have not had it in my power to obtain any other statement of the battle of Maguaga,

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than that made by Gen. Hull, and as it is deemed correct, so far as it goes, I have thought proper to insert the most important parts of it.

“The main body of the army having recrossed the river at Detroit, on the night and morning of the 8th August, six hundred men were immediately detached under the command of Col. Miller, to open the communication to the river Raisins, and protect the provisions, which were under the escort of Capt. Brush. This detachment consisted of the 4th United States’ regiment, and two small detachments under the command of Lieut. Stansbury and Ensign M’Cabe of the 1st regiment; detachments from the Ohio and Michigan volunteers, a corps of artilleryists, with one six pounder and an howitzer under the command of Lieut. Eastman, a part of Captains Smith and Sloan’s cavalry commanded by Capt. Sloan of the Ohio volunteers. Lieutenant-Colonel Miller marched from Detroit on the afternoon of the 8th inst. and on the 9th, about four o’clock, P. M. the van-guard, commanded by Captain Snelling, of the United States’ regiment, was fired on by an extensive line of British troops and Indians, at the lower part of Maguaga, about fourteen miles from Detroit. At this time the main body was march-

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ing in two columns, and captain Snelling maintained his position in a most gallant manner, under a very heavy fire, until the line was formed and advanced to the ground he occupied, when the whole, excepting the rear guard, was brought into action. The enemy were formed behind a temporary breast work of logs, the Indians extending in a thick wood on their left: Lieutenant-Colonel Miller ordered his whole line to advance, and when within a small distance of the enemy made a general discharge, and proceeded with charged bayonets, when the whole British line and Indians commenced a retreat. They were pursued in a most vigorous manner about two miles, and the pursuit discontinued only on account of the fatigue of the troops, the approach of evening, and the necessity of returning to take care of the wounded. The judicious arrangements made by Lieut. Col. Miller, and the gallant manner in which they were executed, justly entitle him to the highest honor. From the moment the line commenced the fire, it continually moved on, and the enemy maintained their position until forced at the point of the bayonet. The Indians on the left, under the command of Tecumseh, fought with great obstinacy, but were continually forced and compelled to retreat. The vic-

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tory was complete in every part of the line, and the success would have been more brilliant had the cavalry charged the enemy on the retreat, when a most favorable opportunity presented. Although orders were given for the purpose, unfortunately they were not executed. Majors Van Horne and Morrison, of the Ohio Volunteers, were associated with lieut. colonel Miller, as field officers in this command, and were highly distinguished by their exertions in forming the line, and the firm and intrepid manner they led their respective commands to action.

Major Muir of the 41st regiment, commanded the British in this action. The regulars and volunteers consisted of about four hundred, and a larger number of Indians. Major Muir and two subalterns were wounded, one of them since died. About forty Indians were found dead on the field, and Tecumseh their leader was slightly wounded. The number of wounded Indians who escaped has not been ascertained.—Four of major Muir's detachment have been made prisoners, and fifteen of the 41st regiment killed and wounded. The militia and volunteers attached to his command were in the severest part of the action, and their loss must have been great—it has not yet been ascertained.”

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At the commencement of the engagement, colonel Miller was thrown from his horse, and continued on foot during the action—consequently, the command devolved principally on majors Van Horne and Morrison, to whose gallantry and judgment, the victory may be partially ascribed.

In this engagement, both officers and soldiers (with the exception of capt. Sloan, of the Cincinnati dragoons, and capt. Hull, the general's drunken son and aid) deserve the highest commendations. Captains Brown and Sanderson, who commanded companies of the Ohio volunteers, on the right wing, acted with great gallantry. In short the conduct of the whole detachment was such as to admit of little discrimination.

Ten non-commissioned officers and privates of the 4th regiment were killed, and 32 wounded. Of the Ohio and Michigan militia, eight were killed and 28 wounded—no officers were killed. Capt. Baker, of the 1st regiment—Lieuts. Larabee and Peters of the 4th—Ensign Whistler of the 17th—Lieut. Silly of the Michigan militia, and ensign Flesher of the Ohio volunteers, were among the wounded.

On the evening of the 9th, col. Miller sent an express to gen. Hull, with information of his success—requesting at the

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same time, a supply of provisions for his detachment.

About 10 o'clock, col. M'Arthur was ordered to take one hundred men from his regiment and to proceed in boats down to the encampment of col. Miller, with six hundred rations, and to return to Detroit with the wounded.

Colonel M'Arthur made immediate application to David Baird, the contractor, for the number of rations ordered. This man, who had uniformly imposed on the troops, and who was strongly suspected of being a British agent in disguise, could not be prevailed on to issue the requisite quantity of rations until 2 o'clock next morning.—Shortly after which, col. M'Arthur embarked his small detachment on board of nine boats, and proceeded to the camp below Maguaga.

The boats, on their passage, had to pass within view of the Queen Charlotte and the Brig. Hunter: but in consequence of a tremendous rain they were not discovered.

After delivering, to col. Miller, the provisions which had been brought down for the use of his detachment, col. M'Arthur made every exertion to place the wounded on board the boats, and to return according to orders. Colonel M'Arthur gave permission to as many of his men as wished it, to

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continue with colonel Miller, as he had instructions to that effect from the general—in consequence of which, the boats were but poorly manned. The col. rowed one boat himself, which was steered by a wounded soldier.

Soon after the boats had left the camp, which was nearly opposite to Malden, signal guns were fired from that fort, and answered by the Charlotte and Hunter. As the boats approached the upper end of an island, the Hunter was seen sailing on the Canadian side. The men immediately put to shore, and all that were able, ran across a swampy prairie to the woods, leaving behind them, the wounded in the boats.

At this critical juncture, the energy of col. M'Arthur was more particularly called into action than on any previous occasion.—Having landed his boat, he jumped ashore and prevailed on the men to return to their duty. He had on board of his boat a cask, which contained a few gallons of whiskey, with which he told the men to fill their canteens and invited them to drink freely; he related to them the anecdote of an Indian, who finding himself descending with rapidity to the falls of Niagara, seized his bottle of rum and drank the contents ere he had reached the dreadful precipice.

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In this manner, the col. encouraged his men, and without difficulty they re-embarked.

By this time the brig Hunter had advanced to a position above the island, and lay at anchor—the colonel proceeded up the river with the wounded to a place where the woods comes within one hundred and fifty yards of the river—here he landed, and ordered the men to assist in carrying the wounded to the woods, setting the example himself—when the wounded were taken to the woods the col. promised to defend them to the last extremity—he then sent an express to Detroit for waggons.—Fortunately for the colonel and for the wounded under his protection, he had foreseen the difficulties likely to arise from such a hazardous voyage, before his departure from Detroit, and had requested col. Godfrey and caps. Sibley and Knaggs, of the Michigan militia, to meet him with waggons, and their compliance with the request, alone prevented the colonel and those sent up with the wounded from falling into the hands of the enemy.—The express returned to the colonel, with information of the approach of col. Godfrey, with waggons and a re-inforcement.

The waggons proceeded to the river, about a quarter of a mile above the boats, and

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were loaded with the wounded—and in the mean while, col. M'Arthur with a few men re-embarked, and rowed the boats to the waggons, which were immediately opposite the brig.—During this time, the Hunter kept up a constant fire of grape shot at the Michigan militia, and of six pound balls at the waggons, as they returned to Detroit, but without effect.

Colonel Cass, whose bravery is only equalled by his prudence, met the waggons between the rivers *d'Corce* and *Rouge*, with a detachment from his regiment, and hastened down to where the boats were left, but he arrived too late to save them.

It was the intention of col. Miller to break up his encampment soon after the departure of col. M'Arthur with the wounded, but was prevented by indisposition. An express was immediately sent to general Hull with this information, and with a request for more provision; colonel Cass, who was below the river d'Corce, with his detachment, was informed by the express of the situation of colonel Miller; upon which he sent the following pertinent and laconic note to the general:

“SIR—Colonel Miller is sick—may I relieve him?”

LEWIS CASS.

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Colonel Cass encamped that night within four miles of col. Miller, with full expectations of permission from the general to relieve him and proceed to the river Raisins. He continued in suspense until next morning, when he returned to Detroit.

Colonel Miller continued at his encampment until the 11th, almost entirely destitute of provisions—and on that evening, held a council with his officers; but before they had determined in what way to act, an express arrived with peremptory orders for the detachment to return to Detroit, where it arrived the next day.

From the manner in which our flags of truce had been treated by the enemy, the general promised the colonels that no more should be sent. But, notwithstanding, to their surprize and to that of the whole army, a boat was seen on the 12th instant descending to Sandwich with a white flag. At this time, it was known, that general Brock was at the town of Sandwich, with the 41st regiment.

Colonels M'Arthur, Cass and Findley, with a mixture of perplexity and indignation, called on the general to know why a white flag was sent to the enemy; the general declared that it was sent without his authority, and denied having any knowledge

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of its departure, or of its object.—The colonels then offered to examine into the affair and have the offender punished—the general appeared much disconcerted at their determined conduct, and observed, he would enquire of capt. Hickman (a volunteer aid) whether he had authorized any person to go to the enemy's camp with a flag.—After an absence of a few minutes he returned and stated, that capt. Hickman had a conversation with capt. Rough on the subject; but did not wish capt. Rough to consider himself permitted to take a flag—but that capt. R. had probably understood that he had permission.

The colonels now found an additional cause for the suspicions they had entertained of the *infidelity* of general Hull.—They extended their enquiries relative to the flag no further; they left him, as they had on many other occasions, with disgust and mortification.

On the same day a letter was sent to Governor Meigs, of which the following is a copy from the original:

Detroit, August 12, 1812.

DEAR SIR:

From causes not fit to be put upon paper, but which I trust I shall one day live to communicate to you, this army has been re-

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duced to a critical and alarming situation. We have wholly left the Canadian shore, and have left the miserable inhabitants who had depended upon our will and our power to protect them, to their fate. Unfortunately, the General and the principal officers could not view our situation and our prospects in the same light. That Malden might easily have been reduced I have no doubt. That the army were in force and in spirits enough to have done it, no one doubts. But the precious opportunity has fled, and instead of looking back, we must now look forward.

The letter from the Secretary of War to you, a copy of which I have seen, authorizes you to preserve and keep open the communication from the state of Ohio to Detroit. It is all important it should be kept open. Our very existence depends upon it. Our supplies must come from our State. This country does not furnish them. In the *existing state of things*, nothing but a large force of two thousand men at least, will effect the object. It is the unanimous wish of the army, that you should accompany them.*

* From the patriotic conduct of Governor Meigs, while the Ohio Volunteers were encamped at Dayton, the troops had the most implicit confidence in his courage and integrity—and it was ardently wished, by all, that he would re-inforce us with additional troops.

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Every exertion that can must be made. If this reaches you safely by Murray, he will tell you more than I can or ought here to insert.

Very respectfully,
I am your's, &c.

LEWIS CASS.

Since the other side of this letter was written, new circumstances have arisen. The British force is opposite, and our situation has nearly reached its crisis. Believe all the bearer will tell you. Believe it, however it may astonish you, as much as if told you by one of us. Even a C——— is talked of by the ——! The bearer will supply the vacancy. On you we depend.

LEWIS CASS,
JAMES FINDLEY,
DUNCAN M'ARTHUR,
JAMES TAYLOR,
E. BRUSH.

In the mean while the fortress at Gowie was evacuated—major Denny and those under his command left it with regret. They had done everything to repel the assaults

Had it been possible for him to have done so, there is no doubt but that Gen. Hull would have been divested of the command.

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which were expected to be made on it. After having burnt the works, they crossed over to Detroit.

On the 13th, the British were seen marching up from Sandwich with a train of artillery within point blank shot; yet the general would not permit lieuts. Dalaby and Anderson to fire on them with their 24 pounders; but they were suffered, unmolested, to erect their batteries opposite to Detroit.

On the evening of the 14th, a detachment consisting of three hundred men, exclusive of officers, marched from the encampment by a circuitous route for the river Raisins. The detachment was composed of volunteers from the regiments of cols. M'Arthur and Cass. Colonel M'Arthur remonstrated against the usual practice of sending out detachments without provisions; upon which the general promised to send provisions after the detachment on pack-horses; but this promise was not complied with.

After marching about twenty-four miles, it was found impossible for the troops to proceed further, as they had become so debilitated by hunger and fatigue as to render it impracticable to prosecute their march to the river Raisins, which was forty seven miles from where they halted. A council of officers, therefore, deemed it expedient to return.

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On the 15th, general Hull pitched a marquee in the centre of the encampment of a most singular structure, with red and blue stripes painted on the top and sides, bearing a strong resemblance to the British flag.—As the general had not erected a tent in camp since the fourth of July, it was indeed, an object of surprise, and evidently portentuous of the issue.

About 1 o'clock, two officers arrived from Sandwich, with a flag of truce, requiring the surrender of Fort Detroit, to the arms of his Britannic Majesty.

The following is a correct copy of Gen. Brock's letter to Gen. Hull:

Head-Quarters, Sandwich, August 15th, 1812.
Sir:

The force at my disposal, authorises me to require of you the surrender of Fort Detroit. It is far from my inclination to join in a war of extermination, but you must be aware, that the numerous body of Indians who have attached themselves to my troops, will be beyond my control the moment the contest commences. You will find me disposed to enter into such conditions as will satisfy the most scrupulous sense of honor. Lieut. col. M'Donell and maj Glegg are fully authorised to conclude any arrangement that

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may lead to prevent the unnecessary effusion of blood.

I have the honor to be, sir,

your most obedient servant,

(Signed) ISAAC BROCK, maj. gen.

His excellency brig. gen. Hull,

Commanding at Fort Detroit.

In the mean while, the British were demolishing a house opposite Detroit, behind which they had erected a battery; and on our side, lieuts Dalaby and Anderson were engaged in building batteries and posting their cannon.

So soon as it was known that the British had demanded the surrender of Detroit, the troops became invigorated, and while they laughed at the idea of British impudence, they were prepared to repel every attempt which the enemy might make to reduce the fort. At one moment, the general also seemed determined to maintain his post—to save his army from disgrace and his territory from invasion; and at another, evinced a pussillanimity and weakness of soul, bordering on superanuation—but in reality, produced by infidelity to his government.

Doomed, as we were, to uneffable disgrace, it is easy to imagine our situation. The threats to let loose the savages upon us,

War on the Detroit

in the event of the general's refusing to surrender the fort, gave rise to no other uneasy feeling than, a belief that prevailed, that the army would eventually become prisoners of war, in consequence of the absence of Colonels M'Arthur and Cass, who it was believed were sent away to facilitate the general's views. The following is the answer to the demand of Gen. Brock:

Head Quarters, Detroit Aug. 15.

Sir—I have received your letter of this date. I have no other reply to make, than to inform you that I am ready to meet any force which may be at your disposal, and any consequences which may result from any exertion of it you may think proper to make.

I avail myself of this opportunity to inform you, that the flag of truce, under the direction of captain Brown, proceeded contrary to the orders, and without the knowledge of colonel Cass, who commanded the troops who attacked your picket, near the river Canard bridge.*

I likewise take this occasion to inform you, that Gowie's house was set on fire contrary to my orders, and it did not take place until

* In a previous note, I have stated, that it was not known why the flag of truce was taken to Malden by Capt. Brown. I have since learnt from Col. M'Arthur, that it was sent thither by order of Gen. Hull, and that

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after the evacuation of the fort. From the best information I have been able to obtain on the subject, it was set on fire by some of the inhabitants on the other side of the river.

I am, very respectfully,

Your excellency's most obdt. servt.

(Signed) W. HULL, Brig. Gen.

Com. the N. W. army of the U. S.

His excellency maj. gen. Brock,
commanding H. B. Majesty's
forces, Sandwich, U. Canada.

The bearers of the flag of truce, having returned, the British armed vessels appeared below Sandwich, and their batteries commenced a tremendous fire upon the city of Detroit, and threw a great number of shells, at the fort, but without effect. The firing was returned by the twenty-four pounders, at our batteries with vigor—one of the enemies guns was silenced in a few minutes. The enemy continued throwing shells until 10 o'clock that night—only one man was injured in the fort.

although it was "contrary to the orders of Col. Cass"—the general was privy to the affair.

The object of the general, in making this *childish* statement, (which was as unnecessary as the apology for burning Gowie's house,) was to shield himself from censure, by throwing the odium on Captain Brown.

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At the commencement of the cannonading all the troops, except general Findley's regiment, were crowded into the fort, and posts assigned them on the ramparts and bastions. Col. Findley was stationed about 300 yards north east from the fort.

Before the enemy had opened his batteries, brigade major Jesup and quarter-master Dugan, rode to Spring Wells to observe the enemy at Sandwich.—They concluded, it was his intention to make a landing the next morning, as the Queen Charlotte was anchored in a position to defend his troops.

After examining a spot in an adjacent orchard, where a battery could be built in half an hour, perfectly secure from the Charlotte's guns, the major returned to general Hull, and requested him to send down to the Spring Wells, a twenty four pounder for the purpose of sinking the vessel—the general told major Jesup that he had consulted his artillery officers on the subject, but they were of opinion, that a bridge over a rivulet on the way, was not sufficient to bear the weight of a twenty four pounder—the major observed, that there was plenty of timber near the bridge to make it strong enough.—The general, however, declined complying with his request.*

* What could have a stronger appearance of treason, in our general, than his suffering the British to erect

The Capitulation

Shortly after this affair, major Jesup, again rode to Spring Wells, where he discovered captain Snelling and a few men with a brass six pounder. After finding that the British force was principally at Sandwich, he returned to the general, and asked permission to cross the river with one hundred men to spike the enemy's cannon—the general told him he could not spare that number—the major then requested one hundred—to which the general answered—"I will think of it."

On the morning of the 16th the enemy re-commenced firing upon the fort and batteries, which was promptly returned by our artillerists, until about an hour before the surrender, at which time orders were given them to desist firing upon the enemy—having previously silenced two of his guns. At this time the enemy had effected a landing; and his force, which "consisted of thirty Royal artillerists—250 of the 41st regiment—50 of the Royal Newfoundland regiment—400 militia, and about 600 Indians," with three six, and two three pounders, were advancing towards the fort—the regulars and militia on the margin of the river, and the Indians through the woods west of the town.

their batteries unmolested, and his refusal to grant Major Jesup and Capt. Snelling, pieces of artillery to prevent their landing?

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When they had advanced within three quarters of a mile of the fort, two twenty four pounders, each loaded with six dozen of grape shot, and one six pounder with canister, were pointed at them, and the artilleryists were ordered by capt. Forsythe and lieut. Anderson to do their duty; but just as they were in the act of applying the matches, capt. Dyson, the senior commandant of artillery, approached, and with his sword drawn, swore that the first man who would attempt to fire on the enemy, should be cut to pieces.

The British batteries, now kept up a constant fire at the fort—one of their shot which had nearly spent its force, fell into the fort, and killed captain Hanks ensign Sibley and doctor Reynolds, and wounded doctor Blood³³—another passed through the gate and killed two soldiers who were in the barracks—two

³³ Lieutenant Porter Hanks, commandant of Mackinac until his surrender of that place on July 17, 1812. Artemas Sibley had been an ensign in the Fourth U. S. Infantry since March 27, 1812. Dr. Reynolds, from Zanesville, was surgeon's mate in Colonel Cass's regiment of Ohio militia, and Dr. Blood, from Kentucky, was a hospital surgeon's mate. Lucas records that Reynolds had one leg shot off and the other "partly off." He died in half an hour. His last words were, "Fight on my brave comrades. I shall never see Zanesville. I die in peace." *The Robert Lucas Journal of the War of 1812*, 64.

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men outside of the works, were also killed—Their shells were well directed, but they generally burst over the fort—but little injury was sustained from them.

About 10 o'clock the Indians were seen in the wood and commons in the rear of the fort, shooting horses and catching some Merino sheep, which had been taken from the farm of lord Selkirk, while we were in possession of the enemy's province.

The fort was now filled with women and children; the men were stationed on the ramparts, and found but little inconvenience from those who had came in for protection.

At this time an officer of the Michigan militia came riding into the fort, and enquired "if general Hull expected col. Brush to defend the city with two or three hundred men;" and at the same time stated, that the British forces were at the tan yard below the town. Gen. Hull immediately went into a room in the barracks, and in less than five minutes returned with a note which he handed to his son; who hoisted a white flag upon a pike staff, and after enquiring of the general whether it would be necessary to say any thing additional, departed. Other flags were instantly hoisted on different parts of the wall, and the British batteries discontinued firing.

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In a few minutes capt. Hull returned accompanied by lieut. col. M'Donell and major Glegg, who went directly to the markee pitched by gen. Hull the preceding day.

It was soon discovered that the gen. had proposed terms of capitulation, and that the troops were considered as prisoners of war.

Col. M'Donell and major Glegg, after entering into articles of Capitulation, with general Hull, mounted their horses and repaired to the ground occupied by the British forces. During their absence the troops in the fort were ordered to stack their arms, and the regiment under the command of col. Findley was marched in. The indignation evinced by col. Findley at the abominable conduct of general Hull, it is impossible to express—he felt like a patriot, and the emotions of his soul, were visible in his eyes. Nor was the sensibility of that officer, alone, aroused. The troops, with a few exceptions, wept bitterly; and while they indignantly dashed their arms to pieces, called down imprecations on their perfidious general.³⁴

³⁴ The story has been told for more than a century that Colonel Cass performed the more or less theatrical act of breaking his sword. Since he was not present at the general surrender it seems improbable that he should have done so. Lucas relates: "I saw Major

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In a short time, the British troops marched into the fort, with gen. Brock at their head. We were then ordered into an adjoining garden, where the following articles of capitulation were read to us:

Camp at Detroit, 16th August, 1812.

CAPITULATION for the surrender of Fort Detroit, entered into between major general Brock, commanding his Britannic Majesty's forces on the one part, and brigadier general Hull, commanding the north-western army of the United States on the other part:

Art. I. Fort Detroit, with all the troops, regulars as well as militia, will be immediately surrendered to the British forces, under the command of major-general Brock, and will be considered prisoners of war; with the exception of such of the militia of the Michigan territory who have not joined the army.

II. All public stores, arms, and all public documents, including every thing else of a public nature, will be immediately given up.

III. Private persons and property of every description will be respected.

Witherall of the Detroit Volunteers Brake his Sword and throw it away, and Several Soldiers broke their muskets rather than Surrender them to the British." *The Robert Lucas Journal*, 67.

War on the Detroit

IV. His excellency Brigadier-General Hull having expressed a desire that a detachment from the state of Ohio, on its way to join his army, as well as one sent from Fort Detroit, under the command of col. M'Arthur, shall be included in the above capitulation, it is accordingly agreed to; it is however to be understood that such part of the Ohio militia as have not joined the army, will be permitted to return to their homes, on condition that they will not serve during the war. Their arms, however, will be delivered up if belonging to the public.

V. The garrison will march out at the hour of 12 o'clock this day, and the British forces will take immediate possession of the fort. (*See Appendix F.*)

(Signed)

J. M'DONELL, *Lt. col.
militia, P. A. D. C.*

J. B. GLEGG, *major,
A. D. C.*

J. MILLER, *Lt. col. 5th
U. S. infantry.*

E. BRUSH, *col. 1st regt.
Michigan militia.*

Approved,
W. HULL, *brigadier-general,*
Comm. the N. W. army.

Approved,
ISAAC BROCK, *Major-General.*

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The detachment under col. M'Arthur, had marched towards the fort with as much expedition as its enfeebled situation would admit of; having been from Friday morning until Sunday evening with no other aliment than a few green pumpkins and raw potatoes, which the men accidentally discovered, and which were eaten with avidity.

Col. M'Arthur arrived with his detachment, within a mile of the fort, and was informed of the surrender. He immediately ordered the detachment back to the river Rouge, where he ordered his men to kill an ox, which was soon done, and eaten half raw, without salt or bread.

After mature deliberation, a council of officers, deputed capt. Mansfield with a flag of truce to the fort—on his way he was robbed of his horse, and arms and of every other article worthy of an Indian's notice.

In the evening capt. Mansfield returned to the detachment, in company with majors Dixon and Givens of the British army. About the same time capt. Elliott arrived and handed the colonel the articles of capitulation. The detachment then marched to Detroit, and stacked their arms in the citidel.

Col. M'Arthur and Cass remonstrated with the British officers against the surrendering of rifles belonging to individuals, and

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contended that the men should be permitted to carry off their private property; but their endeavors were without effect. Colonel M'Arthur finally observed that he had surrendered the musketry and must submit; otherwise he would contend for the rifles—*vi et armis*.

During the intermediate time, the American flag was pulled down, and the British ensign hoisted in its place.³⁵ The batteries

³⁵ Charles Askin, an intelligent Canadian militiaman in Brock's army, has left one of the clearest descriptions of the actual transfer of the fort to British hands: "We marched into the town and from that up into Fort Lernow; but there were so many American troops in it that we could not all get in. I believe our marching in was improper, and that it was done by mistake, for we were but a few minutes there before we were ordered to march out. I really think there was while we were in the Garrison two Americans for one of us and they had still their arms. We formed on the West side of the Fort in line, until all the Americans had marched out, but I was so situated that I could not see them coming out. They did not march with the honors of War though I am told they were allowed to do it by the Capitulation but the Officers of the Am. Army were so mortified that they had to surrender without fighting that they were indifferent about it or anything else there. The American colours were flying nearly an hour after we first marched into the Garrison. After the Americans had all marched out, the Grenadiers and Light Infantry of the 41st Regt, and the Volunteers in that Regt. . . . marched into the Fort, with Drum and

The Capitulation

then commenced firing a *feu de joye*—the Indians raised the yell of triumph, and discharged their pieces in the air. Our agitation had now reached its acme—Sullen bursts of indignation disturbed every bosom, and where tears did not flow, it was because,

“Grief drank the offering, ere it reached the eye.”

A British guard which was stationed in the ordnance yard, pulled the knapsacks off our backs, and our knives from our scabbards. The savages at the same time were robbing citizens of their property, and divesting our officers and dragoons of their horses and accoutrements.

Several pieces of brass ordinance, surrendered on the *sixteenth of August, 1776* by col. Baum, to the immortal Stark, were reviewed with pleasure by some of the British officers, who in the extacy of joy, saluted them with kisses.³⁶

fife, to the Tune of the British Grenadiers. I must say that I never felt so proud as I did just then. As soon as we were in the Fort, the American Colours were taken down and ours hoisted. Three Cheers were given as they were hoisted by the Militia and others outside the Fort and the Indians when the Salute with the Cannon was given gave an Indian yell every shot.” *The John Askin Papers* (Detroit, 1931), II, 719–20.

³⁶ For the story of these cannon, see *ante*, III-12.

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The 4th regiment and the other troops which had been surrendered, (except the Michigan militia) were escorted by British guards to the armed vessels and cartels, into which they were stowed and floated down the river nearly to the spring Wells. Colonel M'Arthur's detachment embarked the next morning. The regulars destined for Quebec, and the volunteers for Ohio.

It will be recollected, that the vessel which was sent from the Miami bay with part of the baggage of the army was taken at Malden, as she attempted to pass the guns of that fort. It is now reduced to an absolute certainty, that in a trunk belonging to general Hull, the declaration of war was found by the British boarding officers, and that it was shown to the American prisoners. Previous to this affair, the British had no knowledge of the existence of war, and it was equally unknown to the prisoners.

This information I have from Lewis Dent, paymaster to col. Cass's regiment, who was among the captured.

It is difficult to tell the quantity of arms surrendered to the enemy, as a considerable number were deposited in the arsenal. On the esplanade, and in the citidel however, two thousand four hundred arms, at least, were stacked by the *prisoners*.

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To prove, that the army was not surrendered in consequence of its want of provisions and ammunition, it is sufficient to state upon the authority of oral & official information, that for the twenty-four pounders, six hundred rounds of fixed ammunition was prepared, of which two hundred were grape-shot; also, six hundred rounds for the six pounders, and two hundred for the four pounders.

The number of shells prepared is not known, but was very considerable.

For the muskets, seventy-five thousand cartridges were made up, besides twenty four rounds in the car-touch box of each man.

In the magazine were sixty barrels of powder, and one hundred and fifty tons of lead. (*See appendix G.*)

In the contractor's store, were at least twenty-five days provisions, and in the territory, an abundance of wheat, and in the vicinity of Detroit, a sufficiency of wind mills to grind any quantity of flour for the consumption of the troops. To the provisions on hand, and the resources in the neighborhood of Detroit, we may add, one hundred and fifty pack horse loads of flour, and three hundred head of cattle under an escort commanded by capt. Brush, at the river Raisins—which, had we been permit-

War on the Detroit

ted, might have been brought to the fort and added to our stores—but this would not have corresponded with the views of general Hull.³⁷

It is unnecessary to add more—every reader can form an opinion of the conduct and character of general Hull. I will therefore close this little performance with the subjoined lines, written by an officer of high rank, immediately after the surrender.

³⁷ Here, as elsewhere throughout the narrative, the author's bias is apparent. Whatever the quantity of supplies surrendered, they were insufficient to maintain Hull's army; else why the forwarding of supplies from distant Ohio, and the repeated efforts of Hull to maintain, and of the British to interrupt, his line of communications? As for the closing statement, Hull had sent out three detachments in ten days' time to establish connections with Monroe, two of them commanded by the Ohio militia officers, and one by Colonel Miller of the regular regiment. All failed, and returned to Detroit without achieving their objective. If Colonel Miller with one-third the entire army (including all its regular soldiers), or Colonels Cass and McArthurs entirely unopposed, could not march to Monroe, by what magic art was Hull supposed to perform the task?

The Capitulation

Our hopes were fixed—our honor safe—
Fancy had shown us victory won,
Full blooded valour fill'd each breast—
Courage and country made us one.
Yet one there was, whose dastard soul,
Ne'er felt a pulse, but beat to fear—
Yes, Hull was there, he had controul,
And drew from bravery's eye the tear.
Curst be this wretch—forever curst,
Who has his country's trust betrayed,
May Hell with all its horrors burst,
And hurl destruction o'er his head!

THE END

Appendix

[A]

Head Quarters at Fort M'Arthur,
June 20th, 1812.

GENERAL ORDERS.

The army will march to-morrow morning at 5 o'clock, the general will beat at half past 4, and the assembly at 5—the following will be the formation of the army: the 4th U. S. regiment on the right, col. M'Arthur's on the left, col. Findley on the left of the 4th, and col. Cass on the right of col. M'Arthur, the Cavalry on the right of the whole.

In marching, the Riflemen of the respective regiments will form the flank guards, and on the day the army marches, they will be excluded from other duty.

The Quarter masters of the respective regiments, will attend to the issuing provisions by the contractors for their regiments, and deliver the same to the different companies.

By order of Brig. Gen. HULL,
THOMAS S. JESUP,
Major of Brigade.

War on the Detroit

[B]

Head-Quarters, at Urbana, June 8th, 1812.

GENERAL ORDERS

The general congratulates the army, that they again have the pleasure of seeing his excellency governor Meigs, before they leave the state.

The whole army will parade this day at one o'clock, will be received by his excellency in the main street of Urbana—His excellency will be attended by a number of general officers of the state, and other distinguished civil and military officers. He will likewise be attended by a number of friendly, respectable Indian chiefs of several nations. The general himself at the head of his army will salute his excellency.

By order of the general,
(Signed) THOMAS S. JESUP

[C]

Head-Quarters, at Urbana, 10th June, 1812.

GENERAL ORDERS

The general congratulates the army on the arrival of the fourth United States' Regiment. The first army of the state of Ohio will feel a pride in being associated with the

Appendix

regiment so distinguished for its valor and discipline.

The general is persuaded there will be no other contention in this army than, which most excel in discipline and bravery. Whatever the rank of the regiment, or to whatever description it belongs, it will in reality, be the first regiment in the army. The Patriots of Ohio, yielding to none in spirit and patriotism, will not be willing to yield to any in discipline and valor.

By order of the General.

(Signed)

THOMAS S. JESUP,
Major of Brigade.

[D]

Extract from general orders, dated Head-quarters of the North Western army on Kings creek, three miles North of Urbana, 16th June, 1812.

GENERAL ORDERS

In the honor of this army, the general feels the deepest interest. He sincerely hopes nothing will take place during the campaign to tarnish the fame it has already acquired; its glory, however, is not yet complete. Bare professions of patriotism, however, do not establish the character of a Patriot.—It is

War on the Detroit

necessary for this army, to meet with a cheerful and manly fortitude the fatigues and dangers it may be called to encounter, before it can be entitled to the honorable appellation of the patriotic army. It is easy to boast of patriotism; It is hard to perform the duties it requires. The general retains the highest confidence in the honorable motives of this army, and he assures both officers and soldiers, that on the one hand, while he will do all in his power for their comfort and convenience, on the other hand, he expects a ready submission to his orders, and a punctual discharge of all their duties.

By command of Brigadier gen. Hull,
comd't.

(Signed) A. F. HULL, *aid-de-camp*.

[E]

The conduct of Brigadier gen. Lucas, of Scioto county, Ohio, during the whole campaign, was such as entitles him to the highest credit.—As a spy, he was prudent and brave—as a soldier, he has no superior—to a correct knowledge of military tactics, he unites those principles of correct policy, which adorns the man.

To general Lucas, I am particularly indebted for some valuable information; and

Appendix

a letter of his, which I have in my possession, I regret that, from its extreme length, I am compelled to leave unpublished, because it contains information of considerable importance.³⁸

[F]

The following additional articles of capitulation, which gen. Brock says "certain considerations afterwards induced him to agree to," were unknown to the troops at their departure from Detroit. They were undoubtedly entered into by the American and British generals subsequent to our sailing.

An article supplemental to the articles of capitulation concluded at Detroit, 16th August.

It is agreed that the officers and soldiers of the Ohio militia and volunteers shall be permitted to proceed to their respective homes on this condition, that they are not

³⁸ The author here errs through understatement. Comparison of his narrative with *The Robert Lucas Journal* leaves no room for doubt that instead of a mere "letter" he had the entire journal at his disposal and copied or abstracted it freely throughout. On Oct. 10, 1812, Lucas wrote a somewhat extensive letter to Secretary of War Eustis, giving an account of the Hull campaign. For it see *The Robert Lucas Journal*, 78-81. This may be the particular letter alluded to by the author

War on the Detroit

to serve during the present war unless they are exchanged.

(Signed) W. HULL, brig. gen.
 Commanding N. W. army U. S.
 ISAAC BROCK, maj. gen.

An article in addition to the supplemental article of Capitulation, concluded at Detroit, 16th August.

It is further agreed that the officers and soldiers of the Michigan militia and volunteers, under the command of maj. Wetherell, shall be placed on the same principles as the Ohio volunteers and militia are placed by the supplemental article of the 16th inst.

(Signed) W. HULL, brig. gen.
 Commanding N. W. army U. S.
 ISAAC BROCK, maj. gen.

[G]

Return of the Ordnance taken in the fort and batteries at Detroit, August 16th. 1812.

IRON.			BRASS.		
24	pounders	9	6	pounders	3
12	do.	8	4	do.	2
9	do.	5	3	do.	1
6	do.	3	8	inch howitzer	1
			5	1-2 do.	1
		—			—
Total		25	Total		8

Appendix

RECAPITULATION

Iron pieces of Ordnance,	25
Brass do.	8
	—
Grand Total	33

(Signed) FELIX TROUGHTON.

Lieut. Commanding Royal Art'y.

Major-General Brock, commanding the forces
in Upper Canada.

In the foregoing pages, I am conscious of having committed many errors—although the facts are substantially correct and collaterally detailed, yet inattention to “the rules of the schools” may have given to the whole an awkwardness, which will appear obvious to the most illiterate reader.

District of Ohio, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the 23d day of October, in the thirty-seventh year of the independence of the United States of America, JAMES FOSTER, of the said district, hath deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

“THE CAPITULATION;

OR,

A history of the expedition conducted by William Hull, Brigadier-General of the North-Western Army.

BY AN OHIO VOLUNTEER”

“My business in this state, made me a Looker on here in Vienna, where I have seen corruption boil and bubble, ’till it overrun the stew.”—*Shakespeare.*

In conformity to the act of congress of the United States, entitled “An act, for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned:” and also, to an act entitled “An act supplementary to an act, entitled, an act, for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of

maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned: and extending the benefit thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching, historical and other prints.”

(L. S.)

HUMPHREY FULLERTON,
Clerk of the district of Ohio.

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